

Gold Digger or Video Girl: the salience of an emerging hip-hop sexual script

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(Received 24 November 2009; final version received 31 August 2010)

Concerns have been expressed in the common discourse and scholarly literature about the negative influence of Hip-Hop on its young listeners' ideas about sex and sexuality. Most of the scholarly literature has focused on the impact of this urban, Black media on young African American girls' sexual self-concept and behaviours. In response to this discourse, Stephens and Phillips (2003) proposed a Hip-Hop sexual scripting model that theorises about specific sexual scripts for young African American women. Their model includes eight different sexual scripts including the Gold Digger script. The present study proposes a ninth emerging script – the Video Girl. Participants were 18 female African American college students, between the ages of 18 and 30 years old from a large urban public university in the Southwest USA. Using q-methodology the present study found support for the existence of a Video Girl script. In addition, the data indicates that this script is distinct but closely related to Stephens and Phillips' Gold Digger script. These findings support their theory by suggesting that Hip-Hop sexual scripts are salient and hold real meaning for this sample.

Keywords: culture; sexual subjectivity; young women

Introduction

The sexuality of African American women has received considerably less attention in the scholarly literature when compared to that of Whites. It is reasonable to postulate that the experience of intersecting racial and gender oppression for African American women contributes to their unique development and expression of sexuality and as such, requires unique study. Recently, the impact of Hip-Hop music/media and its influence on young African American women's sexuality has begun to receive attention in the research literature (e.g. Stephens and Phillips 2003, 2005; Stokes 2007; Wingood, Hunter-Gamble, and DiClemente 2003). Stephens and Phillips (2003, 2005) proposed a Hip-Hop sexual scripting model that attempts to provide a framework for understanding the role of that specific popular media on adolescents' sexual scripts. In sum, the authors argue that the popular images found in mainstream Hip-Hop promote and reinforce racially-stereotypic and highly-sexualised portrayals of African American women. In addition to the eight sexual scripts proposed by Stephens and Phillips (2003), we propose a new emerging Hip-Hop script – the Video Girl. The Video Girl script was developed by the first author in response to the overwhelming commercialism that exists in Hip-Hop culture. The current study attempts to empirically examine the saliency of that Hip-Hop sexual script as distinct from the Gold Digger script.

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Hip-Hop sexual scripts

Sexual scripting theory focuses on the ways in which culture shapes one's perception and expression of appropriate and normative sexual behaviour. In essence, sexual scripts are culturally and socially constructed ways of interpreting and responding to a range of sexual stimuli (Simon and Gagnon 1973). According to theory, sexual scripts determine a person's choice of sexual actions and the qualitative experience related to those acts. Sexual scripting theory dictates that there is a clear link between an individual's culture and the development of sexual scripts. However, this link has not been fully explored for African American women. From a cultural perspective, many of the sexual scripts available for young African American women have been shaped in a context that is rife with intersecting racist and sexist messages. For young people, Hip-Hop acts as a significant medium through which these messages have been promulgated. Therefore, predominant Hip-Hop sexual scripts manifest the intersection of existing negative racial and gender stereotypes that shape perceptions of African American women's sexuality.

Hip-Hop represents a large urban American subculture that has roots in Africa and has spread across the world via its primary media – rap music. Hip-Hop, however, is not a monolithic construct or subculture. Over the years since its inception in the mid-1970s, the culture has expanded and the music/media has changed a great deal. For women in particular, Coleman, Ross and Butler (2009) discussed how Hip-Hop represents a content and tone that has devolved from 'one of empowerment for Black women to one primarily of sexuality' (12). The emphasis on African American women's sexuality in Hip-Hop music/media allows it to be a powerfully influential source of sexual scripting for this cohort. The use of video images coupled with the highly-sexualised content of mainstream Hip-Hop music/media is a seductive and efficient means of imbuing notions of 'appropriate' patterns of sexuality for young African American women. Young African American women are particularly likely to adhere to sexual scripts that are depicted in Hip-Hop because they represent figures to which they assume similarity. Hip-Hop music/media provides instructional guides 'displayed by members of the culture who have already adopted the scripts as well as through mass media depictions' (Wiederman 2005, 496). Moreover, these instructional guides act in ways that direct how individual consumers perceive themselves and intrapersonal sexual situations. In this way, the sexual scripts promoted via Hip-Hop music/media perform a twofold function: they provide (1) guidelines for individual sexual self-concept and behaviour and (2) a gauge by which young African American women can measure the extent to which they meet these expectations. Unfortunately, the role of sexual scripts promoted via Hip-Hop music/media has received little empirical attention in the literature.

According to Simon and Gagnon (1984), sexual scripts are 'essentially a metaphor for conceptualising the production of behaviour within social life' (98). Building on sexual scripting theory (Simon and Gagnon 1973, 1984), Stephens and Phillips (2003) developed a Hip-Hop sexual scripting model for young African American women. Specifically, Stephens and Phillips suggested that the sexual scripts available to this population via Hip-Hop music/media have a tendency to inhibit the development of healthy sexuality by restricting sexual scripts to those that reflect negative gendered racial stereotypes. Therefore, African American women's sexual scripts can generate behaviours that serve as self-fulfilling prophecies in support of the script itself. This can at times promote dysfunctional consistency and make it difficult for the individual to act in ways that are inconsistent with a particular script. As Hill-Collins (1990) points out, what is particularly concerning about the ubiquity of the gendered racial stereotypes that abound in US

discourse about Black women is that Black women themselves become socialised to accept these false images as reality. So, even with the best of intentions toward resistance, many young African American women are likely to adopt and manifest the available Hip-Hop sexual scripts.

Stephens and Few (2007a, 2007b) have found support for the Hip-Hop sexual scripting model with African American adolescents. They have found that the young people in their studies are able to identify salient aspects of each script based simply on presented visual representations of Hip-Hop icons that portray each script. Respondents consistently intimated that music videos have had a significant impact on their understanding of the sexual scripts. Young people were also able to discuss the scripts' relevance in their personal lives and intimated attitudes toward girls that reflect specific scripts in theorised ways. For example, the young men in their sample indicated that they would engage with girls identified with the 'Freak' script in markedly different ways than the other scripts. In addition, Stokes (2007) examined African American female adolescents' personal webpages in an attempt to explore how Hip-Hop music/media influence girls' self-presentation. What is noteworthy is that Stokes did not use Stephens and Phillips' model *a priori* to analysing the content of the webpages, yet she found evidence consistent with several of their scripts. Together, this nascent body of literature indicates that sexual scripts promoted via Hip-Hop music/media have real meaning and value for African American youth and their developing sexuality.

While a great deal of the literature exploring the impact of Hip-Hop on African American women has focused on younger adolescents (Peterson et al. 2007; Stephens and Few 2007a, 2007b; Stokes 2007; Wingood et al. 1993, 2003), we thought it was important to begin to explore the relevancy of Hip-Hop sexual scripts on older adolescents and young adults. Hip-Hop has been an increasingly prevalent aspect of Black culture for approximately 30 years. Young adult African American women who have had a longer history with the music and culture may serve as a unique population of study in that they bring a more nuanced experience and understanding of the culture than younger women. In that time, the music and culture has become increasingly commercialised and commoditised. This commercialism and commoditisation has contributed to a narrowing of the range of images by reflecting more overt racially gendered stereotypes (Rose 2008).

We argue that this commercialisation and commoditisation of Hip-Hop has significant implications for the theorised negative impact on African American women's sexuality. The era of increased commercialisation in Hip-Hop has been referred to as the 'bling bling era' (Payne and Gibson 2008). The bling bling era includes music and videos with a myopic emphasis on luxury material goods and lifestyle that oftentimes portray African American women as objectified accessories to that lifestyle. Along with this material focus in the music and videos, the bling bling era ushered in a period of increased entrepreneurship beyond music. We argue that the Video Girl is an accompanying outcome of both the emphasis on materialism and entrepreneurship in the bling bling era. Some African American women have been able to savvily parlay their status as a sexual commodity within Hip-Hop music/media to pursue their personal aspirations for success in the modelling and acting fields. The notion of the conniving sexual temptress (i.e. the Jezebel) is one that has long-standing prevalence in sexual stereotypes about Black women (Stephens and Phillips 2003) that seems to have found a new expression within Hip-Hop music/media.

The Video Girl script, therefore, provides a useful framework for exploring the role of sexuality in a manner specific to Hip-Hop culture. We were curious to know the extent to which Stephens and Phillips' (2003) Gold Digger script was recognisable by young adult African American women and the degree to which this script was distinct from our newly

proposed Video Girl script. The Gold Digger and the Video Girl scripts were selected for exploration because they similarly reflect the choice of the woman to use her sexuality for personal gain, be it purely material/economic (i.e. Gold Digger) or occupational (i.e. Video Girl). The purpose of this study was to empirically examine the saliency of this emerging Hip-Hop sexual script.

Script descriptions

The Gold Digger script depicts a woman who is consciously aware that her sexuality can be used to gain economic rewards (Stephens and Phillips 2003, 2005). Typically, the term Gold Digger is derogatorily relegated to a woman who uses her sexuality to enter into a relationship (often to the extent of marriage) with a man primarily for the purposes of attaining a higher socio-economic status. However, Stephens and Phillips' description is slightly different in scope. Their Gold Digger script is widely encompassing in that the woman may come from a variety of socio-economic statuses and pursues men within *or* above her socio-economic status to get her material needs met. The behaviour and attitudes reflected in the Video Girl script seem closely related to the Gold Digger script in its resourceful manipulation of the woman's sexuality with the goal of personal material gain. Whereas trading material and economic rewards for sex describes the Gold Digger, the Video Girl trades or alludes to sex to gain entry and fame specifically within the music industry. The Video Girl is a woman who uses sexuality as a tool to help her gain access into and ensure success within the entertainment industry. To obtain her goals she is willing to invest heavily into her appearance, to use her sexuality as a weapon and/or to strictly date men who can advance her career. The Video Girl script has become increasingly prevalent in Hip-Hop culture to the degree that some of the more popular women featured in Hip-Hop music videos have become household names in Black urban culture (e.g. Buffy the Body, Ki Toy Johnson, Amber Rose, Rose Acosta, Angel Lola Luv: refer to the appendix for specific features and characteristics of each of the scripts).

Many of the other scripts proposed by Stephens and Phillips' (2003) also have a specific focus on the woman's explicit sexuality, most notably the Diva and Freak scripts. Given Stephens and Phillips descriptions of the Diva and Freak script we understood that neither of these scripts' central features focused on the women's singular use of her sexuality for direct material gain. Therefore, we believe the Gold Digger script offers the strongest discriminant validity for the newly proposed Video Girl script because of their similar use of their sexuality to attain a specific monetary/material goal.

Current study

Although there is extensive research on the sexual scripting process for white adolescents, there is considerably less research describing this process for young African American women (Eggermont 2006; Maticka-Tyndale 1991). Exploring sexual scripts for African American women and the messages that undergird them is important in understanding ways to intervene with this population around their sexuality and sexual behaviour. Given the disparate prevalence rates of STI contraction in African American girls and women, the role of sexuality and sexual behaviour in this cohort is extremely important to study (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2007). This study tests the assumptions made by Stephens and Phillips (2003) regarding Hip-Hop's influence on the development of sexuality in a sample of young adult African American women. Specifically, we undertook a careful analysis of two closely related scripts: the Gold Digger and Video Girl scripts.

We used q-methodology to address the following research questions: (1) is the Gold Digger script described by Stephens and Phillips (2003) consistently identified across participants, (2) is the described Video Girl script consistently identified across participants and (3) are participants able to distinguish between characteristic features of each script?

The growing body of research on the influence of Hip-Hop culture on young African American women has utilised qualitative approaches (Stephens and Few 2007a, 2007b). Few studies (Stokes 2007) have utilised both quantitative and qualitative approaches in examining the role of Hip-Hop culture and young African American women's sexuality. A mixed approach may be helpful in answering questions that single approaches are unable to address. Q-methodology is one such method.

Q-methodology identifies groups of individuals that share common perspectives within a broader domain of interest or experience (Brown 1980), it provides details into subjective viewpoints while simultaneously providing more global descriptions of cultural phenomena (Stenner et al. 2006). Q-methodology aims to reveal (and to explicate) some of the main viewpoints favoured by a particular group of participants. Large numbers of participants are not required for a q-methodological study (Watts and Stenner 2005).

This methodology has been used with other research exploring sexual content with youth. For example, in their study, Stenner et al. (2006) used q-methodology to explore the views of adolescents from Cataluña, England and Slovakia regarding sexual behaviours and its implications on health. Although q-methodology is interested in participants' subjective experience, consistency of participant responses with Stephens and Phillips' (2003) Hip-Hop sexual scripts, would suggest that the scripts are salient to the sample, justifying continued exploration into the influence of these scripts for this population.

For the present study, we believed q-methodology would be a useful tool in exploring the subjective opinions of the participants' on different aspects of the Hip-Hop sexual scripts under question. In other words, this approach allowed us to determine the extent that participants' viewpoints of the Gold Digger were consistent with Stephens and Phillips' (2003) script yet distinct from the proposed Video Girl. Although q-methodology is interested in participants' subjective experience, within the current study consistency of participants' viewpoints would suggest that the scripts are salient to the sample.

Methods

Participants

African American undergraduate females ($n = 18$) were recruited from classes in Human Development and Family Studies, Psychology and African American Studies at a large, urban public university in the Southwest USA. Participants were solicited from undergraduate classes, where the investigator made a brief presentation about the study and requested volunteer participants. Participants were also recruited online via a participant recruitment system for the university. The study was announced as an opportunity to participate in a study on the influence of the depictions of young African American women in Hip-Hop culture on African American young adults. Participants ranged in age from 18–30 years of age. This age group provided a sample of people who were born and came of age during the era of Hip-Hop and, therefore, it was assumed would have the greatest likelihood to have been influenced by some aspect of Hip-Hop culture (e.g. music, videos, magazines). The mean age of the sample was 22.0 years ($SD = 6.95$) and represented a fairly even range of undergraduate academic standings (22.2% freshman, 22.2% sophomore, 33.3% junior and 22.2% senior). All of the participants in

the sample identified as heterosexual. A large percentage of the sample (44.4%) reported watching television for 6–10 hours per week, with an additional 33.3% reporting watching 0–5 hours per week. Of those hours spent watching television, the sample reported that a significant component of that time was spent watching music videos: 77.8% watched music videos 0–20% of the time, 16.7% watched videos 50–75% of the time and an additional 5.6% watched videos 21–49% of the time. When asked about the source of the videos most of the sample (61.1%) watched them on the Black Entertainment Television (BET) network. Thus, we felt that the sample adequately represented the cohort under study by having a relevant exposure to Hip-Hop music/media.

Materials

A q-sample was constructed, which consisted of complete statements identified through a process that involved extensive reference to Stephens and Phillips's (2003) Hip-Hop sexual scripts (i.e. Diva, Gold Digger, Freak, Dyke, Sister Soldier, Sister Savior and Baby Mama), review of popular media (e.g. music video, radio, magazines) and critical discussion with other African American women that identified with Hip-Hop culture. A pilot study was then conducted with five women that reflected the relevant population with the purpose of determining the feasibility of the design and to provide preliminary evidence for the Video Girl script. Following the pilot study, the participants provided feedback on the sort activity and the scripts. Results from the pilot were used to streamline the procedures used in the current study and fine-tune the descriptors contained in each script. Each q-sort deck consisted of 15 cards that contained 12 descriptor items and three distractor items. The descriptor items were reduced from a larger set of 25 items derived from Stephens and Phillips (2003). The distractor items were neutral items (e.g. 'She likes the colour red') that were not taken from Stephens and Phillips (2003) scripts that were included in each deck for the purpose adding heterogeneity to the items presented (Watts and Stenner 2005). Across decks there was one common distractor item (i.e. 'She has many friends'), the other distractors used were unique to each specific deck. The final q-sort items were scrutinised to ensure comprehensive coverage of the features of each script and also for balance of positive and negative statements (Watts and Stenner 2005). The statements (see Appendix 1) cover such areas as attitude, desires and self-image.

Procedure

Participants attended one of several available group administration sessions on campus. During that time they reviewed informed consent materials, completed the q-sort task and the questionnaire described below. During the group administration, each participant was given a large manila envelope containing smaller envelopes that contained: (1) 15 cards with either a descriptive statement about the script or a distractor item, (2) a ranking sheet, (3) a brief questionnaire and (4) instructions for completing the task.

Sorting procedure

Each card in the deck contained a numbered descriptor that was either a feature of the script or a distractor item. There were four distractor items included in each script. The distractor items were included because we wanted to reduce the amount of nuance within each set. We suspected that participants would be able to more easily rank the features of the script if there were exaggerated distinctions among the characteristics described. However, any significant loadings of descriptor items would reflect the participant's organisation of the

script items rather than Stephen and Phillips' (2003) articulation of the scripts. First, participants were asked to familiarise themselves with all of the descriptors for each script by reading through the statements once. Next, participants were asked to read the statements again and rank them on an 11-point Likert-type scale with +5 being 'most descriptive' and -5 being 'least descriptive' of the script. Participants were required to rank at least one descriptor on the -3 through +3 points and two descriptors on the -5, -4, +4 and +5 points. They were also encouraged to adjust their rankings until they felt they had the most representative rankings from their viewpoint. Participants were instructed to record their rankings for each script on the ranking sheet provided once they were satisfied.

Questionnaire

Participants completed a demographic questionnaire that assessed their gender, sexual orientation and social class. In addition, participants were presented with four other questions to assess their familiarity with the scripts and the degree to which they felt the items included in the q-set were representative of the two sexual scripts. This data was requested in order to provide the researchers with additional qualitative data for use during the interpretation of the factors. For the purposes of this study, we chose to focus on the question: 'Do you think that the descriptions you read completely described the popular depictions of African American women in Hip-Hop? Please explain.'

Analysis

Q-methodology analyzes participants' responses by using factor analytic techniques. This allows the researcher to identify statistically significant groupings of the participants' viewpoints. Similar to qualitative methods, q-methodology is structured to provide participants with an opportunity to tell their story in their own words (i.e. relay their subjective realities) to the researcher on a given topic. The significant difference from a strictly qualitative method is that in q-methodology the researcher provides participants with aspects of the narrative (i.e. the q-set) to tell their story. Given its focus on rich description of participants' subject experience, large sample sizes are not required for this approach (Stenner et al. 2006). The completed q-sorts were analyzed using a dedicated q-methodology software package, *PQMethod* (Schmolck 2002). Two q-sorts in the Gold Digger script and eight sorts in the Video Girl script had missing items and were not included in the final analysis. The q-sorts that loaded significantly and uniquely on a factor were merged by *PQMethod* to form an 'exemplar' q-sort (Watts and Stenner 2005) for each script. From these exemplars, it was possible to compare the participants' perceptions of the Gold Digger and Video Girl scripts. Descriptive analyses were conducted on the demographic data. The open-ended responses from the questionnaire were reviewed for consistent themes using content analysis.

Results

Gold Digger script

Using varimax rotation, four factors from the Gold Digger script with eigenvalues of 1.00 or higher were extracted, accounting for 85% of the variance. The Gold Digger script describes a woman who trades sex for material and economic rewards. Factor 1 included three items and accounted for 44% of the variance. This factor was labelled *Resourceful Agency* because the items reflected the individual's ability to utilise her personal assets for personal gain. Factor 2 included three items and accounted for 21% of the variance.

This factor was labelled *Material Pursuits, Connections* because the items reflected the woman's tendency to exploit her relationships with others for material gain. Factor 3 included two items and accounted for 13% of the variance. This factor was labelled *Interests and Desires* because the highest loading items seemed to describe the activities that are central to her attention and focus. Finally, Factor 4 included two items and accounted for the remaining 7% of the variance. This factor was labelled *Economic Dependence* because the highly loaded items seemed to illustrate the woman's dependency on others for financial maintenance.

Video Girl script

Three factors in the Video Girl script (varimax rotation, eigenvalue of 1.00 or over) were extracted, accounting for 79% of the variance. The Video Girl utilises resourceful manipulation of her sexuality with the goal of access into the music industry. Factor 1 included three items and accounted for 35% of the variance. This factor was labelled *Professional Goals* because the items in the script seemed to reflect the woman's focus on achieving fame and fortune within the music industry by any means necessary. The second factor included three items and accounted for 20% of the variance. This factor was labelled *Sexuality as Sole Asset* because the items seemed to highlight that despite her strong desire to attain fame in the entertainment business, the only way she can achieve it is through the exploitation of her sexuality. Finally, factor 3 included three items and accounted for the remaining 14% of the variance. This factor was labelled *Importance of Appearance* because the items seemed to reflect the importance of physical appearance in distinguishing the Video Girl from her competition. These items are distinct from *Sexuality as Sole Asset* in that they spoke directly to specific aspects of the woman's physical appearance as opposed to a more general sense of sexuality.

Open-ended responses

In addition to the q-sort task, we were also interested to hear the participants' voice in describing the Hip-Hop sexual scripts. This was done to explore if the participants' understanding of the scripts included characteristics beyond those originally described by Stephens and Phillips and newly proposed in the Video Girl script. Participants were asked to indicate whether the features included in each q-set were descriptive of the script they represented and to justify their response. These were reviewed by the co-authors and one additional external reviewer for content analysis. Consensus was reached on five central themes. Each participant indicated that in fact the characteristics included in the q-set were descriptive of the script. Their justifications included a range of responses that were consistent with each script. These included: (1) negative racially gendered stereotypes, (2) promiscuity, (3) sexual aggressiveness, (4) resiliency and (5) distancing from the women described in the script. For example one participant wrote, 'I do, it seems that each description was descriptive of every type of girl in the video, because there are so many'. Another wrote, 'I do agree. Most of the descriptions provided were things that society has depicted of the African American women in Hip-Hop culture, most were from a derogatory stand point'.

Discussion

This study was an exploratory investigation into the influence of Hip-Hop music/media on young African American women's sexuality in a college sample. The primary aim of this

study was to explore two unique Hip-Hop sexual scripts for African American women. Related to that goal, we sought to answer three research questions: (1) empirically identify specific features of Stephens and Phillips' (2003) Gold Digger script, (2) empirically identify specific features of a newly proposed Video Girl script and (3) determine the extent to which the characteristic features of each script were identified across participants. Results of the q-methodology provide support for each question. Specifically, we found evidence of distinct aspects of each script as significantly unique within each q-sort. In addition, we found evidence of distinct aspects of each scripts across the two q-sorts. We discuss these as well as implications for future research based on our findings.

In terms of our overall aim, the use of q-methodology allowed us to empirically explore the structure and meaning of the Gold Digger and Video Girl scripts. This flexible approach to quantitative analysis allowed participants to express their subjective viewpoints of the salient features of each of the scripts. The results of the by-person factor analysis indicated that across participants, specific characteristics of each script were readily identifiable. Among the participants there was clear recognition and understanding of the Gold Digger and Video Girl scripts. For the Gold Digger script, these findings provide preliminary empirical support for an aspect of Stephens and Phillips' (2003) model in a college sample. This is significant in that previous research examining the Hip-Hop sexual scripts has been limited to younger adolescents. However, as we argued, Hip-Hop music/media likely has significant impact on late adolescents and young adults. Given that our sample included young African American women attending a large urban university, there seems to be support for the relevance of Stephens and Phillips' framework with an older cohort of African American women. In addition, the findings indicate empirical support for a new emerging script, the Video Girl.

This further supports the need to examine the influence of Hip-Hop sexual scripts on young adult African American women. These finding are significant in that they indicate that a wider developmental lens beyond adolescence should be considered in future study of the role of Hip-Hop music/media on African American women's sexuality. As mentioned previously, the literature thus far has been limited in focus on younger adolescents (Stephens and Phillips 2003, 2005; Stokes 2007; Wingood et al. 2003; Muñoz-Laboy, Weinstein, and Parker 2007). However, research examining the impact of media on sexual attitudes and behaviour indicates that young adulthood is a developmental period in which the greatest exploration of sexuality takes place and in which the media has a significant impact (Ward 2003).

When considering these two scripts together, all of the participants seemed to focus on both the Gold Digger's and the Video Girl's sexual activity but distinguished them by the purpose of that activity. This was evidenced by the fact that the most descriptive items for the Gold Digger script were those that described her using her sexuality in order to obtain and maintain material provisions. In addition, evidence of this distinction was seen in the ranking of items that reflected the Video Girl's use of her sexuality for professional gain. The first factor extracted from the Video Girl script highlighted its distinction from the Gold Digger script. Those items directly reflected the heart of the script – her gaining access into the music industry. This type of entrée most often happens through social contact with men in the industry.

Despite the distinctions between the two scripts there are some noteworthy observations relevant to both scripts. Namely, the participants seemed to endorse clear ideas of the women represented in the scripts across the dimensions of her appearance, attitudes, personal interests, desires and interactions with others. In addition, there seems to be a perception that among young African American women, sexuality can be used as a tool in bartering for goods or used as a means to an end. Moreover, using one's sexuality in order to

achieve a desired goal may be viewed as a source of power or an assertion of control. In this way, young African American women's sexuality is objectified as a resource as opposed to an integral aspect of their identity. It is possible that these sentiments represent contemporary internalised remnants of the legacy of slavery during which African American women's sexuality was manipulated, exploited and controlled by dominant others (Hill-Collins 1990; Roberts 1997). The significant similar rankings across participants and their open-ended responses indicate the presence of a shared understanding about women depicted in the sexual scripts presented.

This study reinforces the relevance of Hip-Hop music/media in playing a key role in absorbing and reflecting ideas about young African American women present in the mainstream socio-political culture. Though this study was with a cohort of young adult African American women, it fits well within the existing empirical literature that indicates that Hip-Hop music/media seeps into the psyche of its female consumers (Peterson et al. 2007; Stokes 2007; Wingood et al. 2003). While previous studies have focused on the measured impact of Hip-Hop on adolescent women's sexuality, there is a dearth in the literature examining the link between Hip-Hop as a cultural expression on young adult African Americans. We believe our data provides support for further exploring the impact of Hip-Hop music/media on late adolescents' and young adults' sexuality. Unfortunately, the results of this study indicate that a salient message embedded in Hip-Hop music/media is that young African American women's sexuality can be exploited for the sole purpose of external gain. This can have major negative implications on African American women consumers of Hip-Hop's sexuality. Among them may be the idea that all African American women perceive their sexuality as a resource that can be used to meet material needs. Such a perception likely serves to limit the range of sexual attitudes, behaviours and expressions deemed appropriate by young African American women. It is the very limited nature of these scripts that we suspect have the greatest negative impact on African American women. Adopting a restricted range of acceptable sexual expressions limits one's perception of possible roles to assume and healthy sexual choices.

It is important to note that, although predominant, the Gold Digger and Video Girl scripts are just two that represent a range of expressions of womanhood and sexuality available to young women. Like the foundational images described by Stephens and Phillips (2003), the Gold Digger and Video Girl scripts are extreme representations of racially and sexually fuelled stereotypes about African American women's sexuality that do not reflect the full range of options of sexual expression. In addition, the roots of Hip-Hop as a cultural expression were not based in an ethos of sexual exploitation but rather a socially conscious critique of the broader culture. From this perspective we argue that there is room within Hip-Hop to act as a counter force to these dominant racially gendered negative expressions of African American womanhood and sexuality. In other words, though the current commercial expression of Hip-Hop music/media is rife with negative messages about African American women, it is only one slice of the broader Hip-Hop culture. In that, there remains hope for the use of Hip-Hop as a transformative force in the lives of young African American women.

Implications for future research

There is clearly a need to investigate the influence of Hip-Hop culture as a socio-cultural factor that influences young African American women's sexuality given: (1) Hip-Hop's overall influence on the group, (2) the powerful messages about African American women's sexuality prevalent within the culture and (3) the unique vulnerability of this

Table 1. Factor loadings from principal components analysis with varimax rotation for Gold Digger script ($n = 16$).

Factor label	Exemplar items	Variance explained (%)	Loading
F1. Resourceful agency		44	7.10
	She may be willing to do whatever it takes to get and keep a man that provides for her		1.29
	She has a sense of humor		1.26
	She sees her physical appearance is an important asset		1.22
F2. Material pursuits, connections		21	3.35
	She uses her sexuality (i.e. Flirting, physical affection) to get material goods		1.44
	She falsely seduces a man under the true pretense of spending his money		1.43
	She has many friends		1.26
F3. Interest and desire		13	2.08
	She enjoys reading		1.43
	She looks for men to provide her with money for self-maintenance		1.38
F4. Economic dependence		7	1.12
	She does not expect to maintain financial stability through education or employment		1.35
	She selects men that are able to provide for her financially		1.08

population to negative sexual outcomes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2007; Grant and Ragsdale 2008). Such exploration in an under-researched area and population is important in understanding the influence of such cultural factors as Hip-Hop culture on African American women. In addition, future research should not only examine the factors within Hip-Hop culture that negatively affect African American women's sexuality but also those that act as protective, curative and empowering factors. It is hoped that this research will contribute significantly to the field of psychology, leading to a greater understanding the psychological processes of African American women and informing clinical practice.

The results of this study support the need for further exploration of the other available sexual scripts for African American women included in Stephens and Phillips' (2003) theoretical model. Information derived from this study supports the supposition of the influence of Hip-Hop music/media in disseminating messages that may negatively inform the sexuality development for young African American women. This exploratory process is also important in empowering young African American women to take a critical look at the messages they receive from Hip-Hop music/media about their sexuality. Additionally, the current research can provide insight into the influence of culture on sexual scripts, as well as to sexual behaviours and their consequences on the African American community. Lastly, we believe that future research should move toward empirically examining interventions to disrupt the impact of the negative racially gendered stereotypes present in mainstream Hip-Hop music/media.

Table 2. Factor loadings from principal components analysis with varimax rotation for Video Girl script ($n = 10$).

Factor label	Exemplar items	Variance explained (%)	Loading
F1. Professional goal		35	3.55
	She aspires to make it in the music industry		1.29
	She is willing to do whatever it takes to get 'put on'		1.15
	Men in the industry seek to possess her because she compliments their image		1.03
F2. Sexuality is her sole asset		20	2.05
	She does not know how to cook		1.71
	Her sexuality is a tool to help her gain access into the industry		1.48
	She dates men that can advance her career in the industry		1.33
F3. Importance of appearance		14	1.40
	She desires to be seen by others		1.55
	She competes with other women		1.08
	She invests heavily into her appearance		1.08

Limitations

There were some limitations to the present study. Generalisations of the results of this study should be made with caution because all of the ideas imbedded in the scripts and the socio-cultural context in which they were developed were unique to the experiences of African American women. Although some of the characteristics described within the scripts may be associated with women from a variety of racial/ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic statuses, given the significant context of Hip-Hop culture in these scripts, we are hesitant to extrapolate our results beyond young African American women. Furthermore, all of the participants in the study were heterosexual women currently enrolled in undergraduate study at a large, urban public Southwestern university. Issues of age, socio-economic status, geographic norms and culture and sexual orientation should be considered in generalising these results to African American women in other contexts. Additionally, assumptions about how young African American women's sexuality is perceived by African American men should not be made because no African American men were included in this sample. Despite these limitations, the findings in this study are important in their contribution to the literature on the influence of Hip-Hop culture on African American women's sexuality.

Conclusions

Messages about African American women's sexuality that are inherent in Hip-Hop culture have a clear impact on the way the sexuality of this group is understood by members of their community. The present study explored one aspect of Stephens and Phillips' (2003) Hip-Hop sexual scripting model for African American women in a college sample.

Although the insights derived in this study are limited to the subjective opinions of the sample of African American women our findings are important in stimulating further investigation in this area. The information derived from this exploration can play a key role in directing future research concerning African American women's sexuality.

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Appendix 1. Descriptive q-set for Gold Digger and Video Girl scripts

Gold Digger	Video Girl
1. She trades sex for money	1. Aspires to make it in the music industry
2. She uses her sexuality (i.e. flirting, physical affection) to get material goods	2. She is talented
3. She believes sex is her most valuable asset	3. She invests heavily into her appearance
4. She has a sense of humour	4. She dates men that can advance her career in the industry
5. She sees men as stepping stones to provide for her short-term needs	5. Competes with other women
6. She will take all that she can from a man	6. Men in the industry seek to possess her because she complements their image
7. She falsely seduces a man under the true pretence of spending his money	7. She excelled in school
8. She selects men that are able to provide for her financially	8. Her sexuality is a tool to help her gain access into the industry
9. She looks for men to provide her with money for self-maintenance	9. She enjoys going to parties
10. She does not expect to maintain financial stability through education or employment	10. Her image mirrors images projected by the industry
11. She has many friends	11. She is willing to do whatever it takes to get 'put on' in the industry
12. She sees her physical appearance is an important asset	12. She desires to be seen by others
13. She may be willing to do whatever it takes to get and keep a man that can provide for her	13. She has many friends
14. She enjoys attending religious services	14. She does not know how to cook
15. She enjoys reading	15. She is a mother

Note: Items in this table are based on script descriptions provide by Stephens and Phillips (2003), with the exception of 'Video Girl', which was added by the researchers.

Résumé

Des préoccupations ont été exprimées dans le discours général et dans la littérature spécialisée à propos de l'influence négative du hip hop sur les perceptions de ses jeunes adeptes sur les rapports sexuels et la sexualité. La plupart des publications se sont concentrées sur l'impact de ce media urbain et noir sur le concept de soi et sur les comportements des jeunes Africaines Américaines. En riposte à ce discours, Stephens et Phillips (2003), ont proposé un modèle d'écriture de scénario sexuel hip hop qui exprime une théorie sur les scripts sexuels spécifiques aux jeunes femmes africaines américaines. Ce modèle inclut huit scénarios sexuels distincts qui comprennent celui de Gold Digger. Cette étude propose un neuvième scénario émergent: Video Girl. Dix-huit étudiantes – africaines américaines, âgées de 18 à 30 ans et fréquentant une grande université publique et urbaine du Sud des USA – y ont participé. En employant la méthodologie Q, l'étude a révélé un intérêt pour le scénario de Video Girl. De plus, les données montrent que si ce scénario est distinct, il reste très proche de celui de Gold Digger de Stephens et Phillips. Ces résultats étayent la théorie de ces derniers en suggérant que les scénarios sexuels hip hop sont essentiels et ont une signification réelle pour les jeunes femmes dans cet échantillon.

Resumen

Se han expresado inquietudes en el discurso común y la bibliografía académica sobre la negativa influencia de la cultura del Hip-Hop en las ideas del público joven sobre el sexo y la sexualidad. La mayoría de la bibliografía académica se ha centrado en cómo influye este medio urbano y de color en la auto-estima y las conductas sexuales de las chicas afroamericanas. En respuesta a este discurso, se propuso (Stephens y Phillips 2003) un modelo Hip-Hop de patrón sexual que teoriza sobre los guiones sexuales específicos para las mujeres jóvenes afroamericanas. Su modelo incluye ocho guiones sexuales diferentes incluyendo el guión de Gold Digger. En este estudio proponemos un noveno guión: el Video Girl. En el estudio participaron 18 estudiantes universitarias afroamericanas con edades comprendidas entre los 18 y los 30 años de una gran universidad pública urbana del suroeste de los Estados Unidos. Con ayuda de una metodología Q (de estrategias cuantitativas y cualitativas) en este estudio hemos encontrado elementos a favor de la existencia de un guión de Video Girl. Además, los datos indican que este guión es diferente pero está relacionado estrechamente con el guión Gold Digger de Stephens y Phillips. Estos resultados apoyan su teoría al sugerir que los guiones sexuales en la cultura del Hip-Hop son destacados y poseen un significado real para este ejemplo.

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