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Running Head: Race, Body, and Sexuality

Race, Body, and Sexuality in Music Videos

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Abstract

Previous research has demonstrated that women are objectified and sexualized in music videos, and that Black characters are underrepresented in most genres. This content analysis addressed the question of whether the bodies and sexuality of women in music videos were portrayed differently based on their race. Music videos ($n=47$) were coded for women's character roles, body size, and visual performances of sexuality, and for Black women's Afrocentricity. Videos were also coded for specific ways women's bodies were objectified or sexualized through camera shots and angles. Implications include the idea that Black women may internalize video messages about beauty and sexuality, and that Black men and White individuals may form inaccurate and harmful ideas of Black femininity because of music video images.

Keywords: music videos, content analysis, race, body size, sexual content, visual images

Race, Body, and Sexuality in Music Videos

The media images that a society produces provide insight as to who and what is important in that culture. Music videos are one medium through which values and ideals are presented. The popular images in current music videos tell viewers stories about what is “normal” in terms of gender, race, and sexuality (Gow, 1996; Jhally, 2007). As they watch, members of a culture learn who they are supposed to be, what they should look like, and what they should do to fit in (Sipiora, 1991).

However, are the tales being told complete and accurate accounts of what it means to be male or female, black or white? If not, then music videos are perpetuating unhealthy, damaging stereotypes of the characters who appear in them, leaving viewers with no idea that the caricatures on their screens are not reality (Kalof, 1999). This study examined how race influences the ways women’s bodies and sexuality are portrayed in music videos, and has implications for how women are viewed by society at large.

Music videos existed in the 1970’s, but with the debut of MTV in 1981, their popularity skyrocketed (Gow, 1990). At first, they were mostly confined to cable television. Today, however, thanks to the accessibility of the Internet and websites like YouTube, individuals can access nearly any music video anytime they want. There has been a great deal of research and analysis of music videos since they became popular, much of it focused on the gendered portrayal and roles of men and women.

Gender

In general, men appear more frequently than women in music videos (Andsanger & Roe, 1999; Signorielli, McLeond, & Healy, 1994; Sommers-Flannigan, Sommers-Flannigan, & Davis, 1993; Wallis, 2010) and they are more likely to be the lead character (Baxter, De Riemer, Landini, Leslie, & Singletary, 1985; Tapper & Thorson, 1994; Zhang, Dixon, & Conrad, 2010).

Men are frequently portrayed as aggressive or powerful characters (Sommers-Flannigan et al., 1993; Vincent, Davis, & Boruszkowski, 1987; Wallis, 2010), while women are presented as passive objects more often than as independent individuals (Alexander, 1999; Vincent, 1989). Women also occupy stereotypically female roles more frequently than men, who are able to act in multiple roles (Andsanger and Roe, 1999; Andsanger & Roe, 2003; Gow, 1996; Seidman, 1992). A woman's physical appearance and sexuality is usually emphasized (Conrad, Dixon, & Zhang, 2009; Gow, 1996; Vincent et al., 1987; Wallis, 2010) and she is more likely to be provocatively dressed than a man (Andsanger & Roe, 1999; Seidman, 1992; Vincent, 1989). Furthermore, women in rap videos tend to be below average weight (Zhang et al., 2010).

Thus, research has demonstrated that women in music videos are portrayed as one-dimensional, sexualized characters lacking agency, with little to offer besides their bodies. The implication is that female characters are valued only for their physical appearance and ability to entertain and please the men in the videos. To the girls and women who watch music videos, these images send the confusing message that to be female is to be alluring yet passive, sexy but also submissive.

One way women and girls are taught about femininity in music videos is through the ways characters are filmed (Jhally, 2007). For example, often the camera is allowed to pan up and down a woman's body or zoom in on one part of her, such as her legs or cleavage. Women are shown posing or dancing for men, encouraging them to watch. This epitomizes Mulvey's (1975) idea of the male gaze. Jhally (2007) explains that "the way in which women are filmed, not simply what they are doing or wearing communicates messages about them...these ways of filming reduce women to one part of their bodies and only to the sexual part of their multifaceted characters." He goes on to point out that the camera techniques themselves are not the problem, but rather the representation of women *only* as sexualized bodies, not as complete humans.

Objectification theory has been used to explain why the music video version of femininity might be damaging. Fredrickson & Roberts (1997) explain that objectification occurs when “women are treated as bodies- and in particular, as bodies that exist for the use and pleasure of others.” Women are portrayed as though their bodies and sexuality represent their entire being. Objectification theory posits that as a result of being objectified, women begin to treat *themselves* as objects to be looked at and evaluated, leading to various mental health risks (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Women begin to view their physical appearance as their self worth. Beauty becomes power—as long as it is the right kind of beauty (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Race

The beauty myth suggests that there is a universal beauty standard that is represented by Eurocentric features including white skin, blond hair, blue eyes, and a low body weight (Conrad et al., 2009). It is here that issues of race come into play. While White women are oppressed by their status as women, women of color are doubly oppressed by both their gender and their race (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The majority of research on women of color in music videos looks at African-American women. Research shows that, with the exception of rap, soul, R&B, and hip-hop, the presence of Black characters in music videos is limited (Andsanger & Roe, 1999; Baxter et al., 1985; Seidman, 1992; Tapper & Thorson, 1994). Since it has already been established that men appear more frequently than women, it is possible to conclude that Black women appear only rarely in music videos.

However, studies show that when Black women are visible, they are usually thinner and more Eurocentric (lighter skin, thinner lips and nose, etc) than the average African-American female (Conrad et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2010). This becomes problematic when one considers research on cultivation theory, which shows the more time individuals spend watching television,

or any media, including music videos, “the more their normative beliefs and attitudes reflect the world portrayed” in those images (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994; Zhang et al., 2010). Furthermore, the theory of attributional ambiguity suggests that people tend to compare themselves to others who are similar in relevant characteristics (Crocker & Major, 1989). Thus, it seems possible that over time, Black women may begin to believe that the women in music videos are reasonable norms against which to measure themselves.

A recent study found that the media presentation of thin Black women has increased over time, which the authors suggested could cause Black women to internalize white standards of beauty (Zhang et al., 2010). Others agree, proposing that media images of Eurocentric Black women may pressure Blacks to associate beauty with light skin tone and Eurocentric features (Conrad, et al., 2009). Such images may be especially harmful in “Black dominated music” such as rap or hip-hop because the standard is ultimately reinforced by Black artists and producers (Conrad et al., 2009). If so, inaccurate portrayals of Black physical appearance could be very harmful to the consumer’s self-esteem and body satisfaction.

These theories are countered by research that suggests Black women prefer a larger body size and are more content with their bodies in general (Abrams, Allan, & Gray, 1993; Kemper, Sargent, Drane, Valois, Hussey, & Leatherman, 1994; Parnell, Sargent, Thompson, Duhe, Valois, & Kemper, 1996; Striegel-Moore, Schreiber, Pike, Wilfley, & Rodin, 1995). Indeed, two recent meta-analyses have shown that Black women judge their bodies more positively than White women do (Grabe & Hyde, 2006; Roberts, Cash, Feingold, & Johnson, 2006). Still, one of the meta-analyses found a change over time in the difference between Black and White women’s body satisfaction, which could mean that Black women are becoming less satisfied with their bodies, or perhaps that White women are becoming more satisfied with them (Roberts et al., 2006). Grabe & Hyde (2006) were very careful to point out that although the expected

patterns were found in their meta-analysis, results showed a much smaller difference between Black and White women in body satisfaction than other research has implied.

One study did find that Black women's body image was not always lowered by viewing thin women in rap videos (Zhang et al., 2009). However, ethnic identity moderated the influence of the images such that Black women with low ethnic identity were much more likely to show body dissatisfaction and a desire for thinness (Zhang et al., 2009). In another study, Black and White women were surveyed about how content they were with specific parts of their bodies. Results showed that though Black women preferred a curvier body in general, they still showed dissatisfaction if they did not meet their ideal body type (Overstreet, Quinn, & Agocha, 2010). Ultimately, concluding that Black women in general *are* more content with their bodies does not mean that they are unaffected by the messages about Eurocentric beauty in the media. Nor does it mean that all Black women are affected equally.

Sexuality

Women, both Black and White, are not only receiving messages about what it means to be beautiful, but also about how they should express their sexuality. Historically, Black and White women have been defined as opposites in terms of how their sexuality was constructed. As Europeans colonized Africa, Black women were viewed as animalistic, hypersexual curiosities. This view was in juxtaposition with the restrained, "civilized" Victorian women who were essentially asexual and whose purity needed to be protected by men (Railton & Watson, 2005). This unavailability of White women served to heighten the sexual availability of Black women. These concepts of difference and inferiority were reproduced until they became part of the collective consciousness about Black sexuality (Railton & Watson, 2005).

The history behind the construction of Black female sexuality makes one wonder if there are still differences in the portrayals of Black and White women's sexuality. A close analysis of

music videos by Black and White artists suggested that Black women are still presented as hypersexual, close to the earth, and available through the display of their bodies, while White women are more restrained and controlled in their sexuality (Railton & Watson, 2005). Of course, White women are often presented very sexually in music videos, but Railton & Watson (2005) explain the difference between the performances of Lil Kim, a Black artist, and Christina Aguilera, a White artist:

“While Kim literally embodies black hypersexuality, her sexuality produced and defined by the site/sight of her black body, Aguilera is able to produce her sexuality through the selective and playful presentation of tropes of raced identity. While Kim can only ever be seen as a black woman, Aguilera is allowed a far more fluid and creative engagement with both raced and sexual identity...Aguilera’s whiteness and privilege is reinscribed precisely by the possibility of such a performance in the first place.” (pg. 60)

Black artists may not have the same options as White artists when it comes to performing their sexuality in music videos. Attributional ambiguity and cultivation theory again become relevant as Black female consumers of music videos may end up believing that they should be hypersexual and available like the women on their screens. Male viewers may learn that they can expect real women to act like the ones in videos.

Rationale and Focus

The ultimate research question for the current study was: How do Black and White women differ in their appearance and their performances of sexuality in music videos? There has been extensive research into the content of music videos. However, the current content analysis is unique because of the combination of variables that were studied. Gender has been extensively analyzed, but never through the lens of race as this study does. Previous studies rarely go beyond documenting the frequency of certain racial groups in music videos. In the

present study, race is used to study gender by analyzing the representation of women in music videos. This study examines how women's bodies and sexuality are portrayed, based on the theory that there are differences in how Black and White women look and act in music videos.

Beauty standards are expressed through popular images in music videos. Therefore, studying the portrayal of Black and White characters' body size and physical features is a way to learn what is considered beautiful in today's culture and whether the definition of beauty differs across races. Researchers suggested that stereotypes about Black sexuality may be especially prevalent in the visual performances of music videos (Railton & Watson, 2005). If Black and White women are found to differ in how their sexuality is portrayed, it could lend support to this theory. Finally, how both the camera and the actions of female characters visually express sexuality is of interest to understand what possible messages are being sent about what it means to be a Black or White woman.

Methods

Sample

A sample of music videos was gathered from the YouTube online video collection. Songs were chosen using the Billboard music charts. The Billboard website contains lists of the week's ten most popular songs organized by genre, as determined by radio airplay audience impressions, which is measured by Nielsen DBS and sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. For this study, the charts containing R&B/Hip-Hop, and Pop songs were used. The sample was collected by gathering all the videos from 2009 and 2010, omitting repeats, for a total of 221 videos, 108 Pop and 113 R&B/Hip-Hop. There were 16 videos that were duplicates, meaning they were on both charts. These were coded, along with 15 randomly selected videos from Pop and 16 from R&B/Hip-Hop, for a total of 47 videos.

Video Analysis

There were two levels of analysis in this study, the video level and the character level. Each music video was assigned an identification number, which corresponded with its title and artist. The year each video was released and its genre, (a) Pop, (b) R&B/Hip-Hop, or (c) both were also recorded. Artist gender was coded as male or female. Because the focus was primarily on the differences between Black and White individuals, artist race was coded as (a) Black, (b) White, or (c) other. Artists were also coded for being solo or a group, and a mixed category was included for artist gender and race if the artist was a group. Up to two featured artists could be coded as needed in addition to the main solo or group artists. The overall video was coded as having (a) no references to sexuality, (b) present but minor or incidental references, (c) moderate levels or (d) sexuality as a significant or major part of video.

Character Analysis

Characters

Individual Characters A lead character was defined as the person who sang or performed the song in the video (Zhang et al., 2010). A support character was defined as an individual who appeared in at least three scenes directly interacting, performing, and/or dancing with the lead character. The lead and support characters were coded for race (Black, White, other) and gender (male or female).

Background Characters A significant background character was coded as an individual, but defined as a group of 3-6 similar female characters that appeared in at least three scenes dancing or performing with lead or support characters. Significant background characters were visible enough to code for specific variables, but not important enough to be coded individually. Group background characters were defined as the people who made up the moving, atmospheric backdrop of the music video. These were usually large groups of fans, friends, dancers, or

partygoers who did not qualify as significant background. They were usually only visible when the camera panned the scene.

Significant and group background characters was coded for race as (a) all Black if the vast majority of the characters were African-American, (b) mostly Black if more characters were Black than White, (c) mixed if the group was about equally divided, and (d) mostly White or (e) all White. They were coded for gender in the same manner. There could be up to five lead, support, and significant background characters per video, in any combination, in addition to the group background.

Character Roles Lead, support, and significant background characters were also coded for the character roles they played in the videos (Gow, 1996). They could be coded for up to three roles. Possible roles were (a) artist/singer, (b) dancer, (c) actor/actress, (d) lonely lover, (e) playboy/seductress, (f) occupation, (g) model, (h) back-up singer, (i) back-up dancer, or (j) companion (see Appendix for further descriptions of each of these roles). Some of these roles were based on those developed in previous studies (i.e. Gow, 1996; Jhally, 2007), while others were added as patterns developed during coding.

As this study's primary purpose was to address race, as opposed gender, which has been studied a great deal in previous research, the following variables were only coded for female lead, support, and significant background characters. In future research, it would be useful to include an examination of male characters for these variables.

Body Variables

Body Size Previous research has indicated that rap music videos portray thin women much more frequently than women of average to larger build (Zhang et al., 2009). To see whether this was the case across race and genre, female characters were coded for body size by

comparing the size of the character to the nine adult female figure drawings developed by Stunkard, Sorensen, & Schulsinger (1983) (see Figure 1 for images).

Afrocentricity In a study of women in rap music videos, a very pronounced favoring of a Eurocentric beauty standard for Black women was found, as determined by the coding of several specific physical features (Conrad et al., 2009). In that study, all the features were coded separately, but here they were collapsed into one overall Afrocentricity variable. Black female characters were coded as being (a) low, (b) medium, or (c) high in Afrocentric features, ranging from a Eurocentric appearance (long, smooth hair, lighter eye color, slender body, thin lips and nose) to more of a traditional appearance. Skin tone was also addressed in Conrad et al. (2009) where results showed that lighter skin tones were displayed more frequently than darker tones. Here, Black female characters' skin tone was coded as (a) light for skin very light to a light caramel brown, (b) medium for skin from a darker caramel to a medium, milk chocolate color, or (c) dark from ebony to very dark based on Conrad et al. (2009).

Sexuality Variables

Sexual Intensity Female lead, support, and significant background characters were coded for the intensity and type of sexuality they displayed in the video. Implicit sexuality was considered to be present if the character appeared in scenes where sexual attraction was a main theme or that seemed to appeal to the erotic (Sommers-Flannigan et al., 1993). Implicit sexuality was coded for actions that were short of explicit sexual activity but suggested sexuality, such as pelvic thrusts, long lip licking, stroking, etc. (Sommers-Flannigan et al., 1993). Implicit sexuality were coded as (a) not present, (b) present less than half the time, (c) present about half the time, or (d) present more than half the time. Characters were coded for explicit sexuality if themes of sexual action were predominant, or if they were shown in scenes where genitalia or

breasts were being touched, or bodies were touching and moving together in a way that suggested intercourse (Sommers-Flannigan et al., 1993).

Sut Jhally (2007) pointed out that women in music videos are often portrayed as “ravenous creatures who desire sex at all times and with anyone who happens to be around.” The presence or absence of this behavior in a character was coded as nymphomania. It has been suggested that Black women’s sexuality is often portrayed as wild or untamed (Railton & Watson, 2005). One way of doing so in music videos is through the use of nature and animal references, which may include outdoor scenes, nature encroaching into a scene, or animal clothing prints and art. The presence or absence of this idea of “wild sexuality” was coded for.

Visual Portrayal How women are represented in music videos affects how viewers see and relate to them. This can be influenced by how the camera shots present them, which may imply that they want to be looked at. These variables attempted to pinpoint some of these techniques based on ideas from Jhally (2007). Isolation objectification was coded for as (a) not present, (b) present one or two times, or (c) present three or more times. Isolation objectification was considered to be present if the camera focused on an isolated body part. It was coded for anytime a person was portrayed as being “one body part of a set of body parts rather than a whole, complete human” (Sommers-Flannigan et al., 1993). This included the full screen shots of bare stomachs, cleavage, lips, genital areas, buttocks, thighs, etc. Images of the top half of a person or her whole face as a close-up were not considered isolation objectification.

Camera pan was defined as anytime the camera slowly panned the entire body of a woman from head to foot or vice versa. It also included shots that started at the waist and went up the torso and chest or down the legs. A woman was considered to be the object of a gaze if she was shown watching herself (looking in the mirror or touching herself) or being watched by actual others in the video (not the implied viewer of the video). This included things like looking

back over her shoulder as she walked away, posing for a camera, or dancing for someone. Both camera pan and object of gaze were coded on the same scale as objectification isolation.

In *Dreamworlds 3*, Jhally (2007) suggested that specific camera angles are often used in music videos to encourage the gaze of both male characters in the video and the viewer at home. The present study coded for the presence or absence of several specific shots that were identified by Jhally (2007). The shot from above was considered present if the camera looked down into a woman's cleavage. The shot from below positioned the camera to look up the body, including up a dress or skirt. A shot between the legs was coded for if a woman's legs were used to frame the action of the scene. A woman bending over in front of the camera was also coded.

The way a woman is dressed in a music video is another important way of displaying her sexuality. Clothing was coded as (a) neutral, which included clothes that were nonsexy like jeans, long sleeves, or loose fitting articles, (b) somewhat provocative, clothing such as sundresses, shorts, short skirts, or tight pants, (c) provocative, like swimsuits, skimpy dresses, or lingerie, or (d) nudity, either outright or implied. The codes for clothing were developed based on the scheme used by Andsanger & Roe (1999). Whether or not a woman undressed for the camera was also coded for. This included stripping, getting ready for bed or sex, taking off a swimsuit cover-up, and any other instances where clothing was being removed.

Coding

The main researcher (a female) and two undergraduate students (one male and one female) performed the coding of the music video data. The two students were given training on the codebook through discussion and examples from videos that were not included in the sample. Once all three coders indicated a proper understanding each of the variables, coding of the videos from the actual sample was performed. At least two members of the team coded each video at the same time, comparing results and talking out disputes at the end of each. Due to the large

number of specific variables, some of the videos or parts of videos were watched more than once, particularly those featuring multiple female characters.

Results

All the coding data was entered into SPSS for analysis. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabs were run to examine the character distributions for the variables. When t-tests and correlations were performed, it was difficult to find any meaningful results due to the small sample sizes for the various character categories, particularly when further subdivided by race. From the sample of 47 music videos, 43 individual female, 59 individual male, 19 significant background, and 27 group background characters were coded, for a total of 148 characters altogether.

Gender

Individual characters were more likely to be male (58%) than female (42%). In addition to being more visible, men (76%) were also more likely than women (48%) to be lead characters than support characters. The three most common character roles were artist, actor/actress, and companions. Male and female characters were about equally likely to be actors/actresses and companions, but 47% of males were artists, while only 17% of females were. The (all female) significant background characters were mostly models (41%) or backup dancers (22%).

Race

Artists of Pop songs were more likely to be White (66%), while R&B/Hip-Hop artists were more likely to be Black (93%). Both of these numbers are approximately what one with a basic knowledge of the two genres might expect. More interesting was the result that 94% of the artists of the songs in both genres were Black. Similar results were found for male and female main characters. Furthermore, Black females were more often lead characters, while White

females were more likely to fill support roles, and there were virtually no White significant background characters.

Body Variables

The body sizes based on the Stuckard et al. (1983) scale were collapsed into low, medium, and high using figures 1-3, 4-6, and 7-9. When the body size variable was collapsed, *none* of the female characters were in the high condition, regardless of race. However, 94% of the White female characters were in the lowest category, much higher than the 68% of Black female characters in the same category. While Black female body sizes were more varied, the majority of the characters were still in the smallest group. Varied, obviously, is relative, considering again that 75% of the females overall were in the lowest category. Across all three genres, individual Black characters were most likely to be medium in Afrocentricity, but most of the Black significant background characters were low on the variable.

Sexuality

White female characters tended to be in videos with lower overall sexuality than Black characters. The majority of the visual variables were collapsed into one variable for analysis. 66% of White female characters and 58% of Black characters were low on this variable. In terms of clothing, 65% of White characters wore low to neutral clothing, and 35% were dressed more scantily. Alternately, 35% of Black women wore neutral clothes and 65% were dressed in more revealing outfits. Black and White female characters were about equally likely to display high implicit sexuality.

Discussion

Researchers are fascinated with the study of music videos as windows to cultural norms. In previous research, men far outnumber women in videos and there is limited minority presence in most genres. Women that are represented are rarely the main character. They are sexualized, occupy stereotypical occupations, wear minimal clothing, and are often portrayed as being submissive, victims, or objects of the male or viewer gaze. Recent studies have shown that thin women are overrepresented (Zhang et al., 2009) and that African-American women tend to adhere to a Eurocentric standard of beauty (Conrad et al., 2009). Furthermore, it has been suggested that Black women's sexuality may be portrayed more visually than white women's, and that this discrepancy could affect the way people view both Black and White women (Railton & Watson, 2005).

The results of the current study are difficult to generalize to the larger population without a larger sample size. Still, as in past research, there are more male than female characters, and men have more agency and freedom in their roles. Black women are more sexualized than white women, and both races of women are much thinner than average. However, contrary to previous studies, the current sample has more Black than White male and female characters. Perhaps the most interesting result was the finding that the vast majority of artists who have songs appearing in both Pop and R&B/Hip-Hop were Black. □ This is an interesting pattern, and it requires further research. What makes the artists who can cross over into both genres different from those who can't?

Each video in this sample was evaluated extensively, but a larger number of videos for each genre would greatly increase the generalizability of the results. As it is, trends are starting to emerge, but it will take at least twice as many characters to achieve statistically significant results. Resource and time constraints prevented the current study from looking at other women

of color, such as Asian or Latina women. Including them in an analysis is crucial to understanding how race influences sexuality.

A more longitudinal sample would be useful, since the videos were all from the same two years. This means that though popular videos were chosen, there may be videos that are still frequently watched because of past popularity that are not included in the sample. A longitudinal study would also allow one to study changes in the portrayal of women by race over time.

It may be beneficial to study videos from more genres, or even across different media types to find out whether the patterns shown in this study of music video are also present in other media images. Furthermore, it would be useful to study the racial depictions of male characters in music videos in the future to understand if and how race influences the construction of masculinity. In addition, though there were three coders, a larger or more diverse research team might have been able to provide a more complete picture of results by picking up themes or nuances that this relatively homogenous undergraduate team may have missed.

Future research should focus on effects these results may have on individuals who view music videos. The theory of attributional ambiguity suggests that Black women and girls should be likely to identify with and compare themselves to the women they see in the videos (Crocker & Major, 1998). Will research support the theory, and is there evidence that they internalize more Eurocentric beauty norms? How does that affect their self-esteem and overall views of themselves? Do they self-objectify more, as objectification theory implies?

To think beyond those directly involved, how do these results affect the Black male view of Black women? Are they more likely to want women who look like those in the videos? Does it make them more likely to objectify Black women or women in general? One must also ask what kind of attributions about Black women these images encourage for white individuals. Do they perpetuate the stereotype of the animalistic, hypersexual Black woman? Future research

should certainly address these questions and implications. Researchers should work to identify who is the most vulnerable to these negative messages, and examine how their effects might be combated.

It would be foolish to simply condemn music videos based on the results of this or any study. The problem is not the videos themselves, but rather the messages they send to their viewers. Furthermore, the suggestive nature of female performance is not the problem, but the fact that often, sexualized images of women are the *only* ones that are shown. Music videos, and all media images, are a way that men and women learn what is “normal” in their own culture. Unfortunately, the stories they are being told in current music videos are based on inaccurate stereotypes that may be damaging to the people they concern. Women need to recognize that they are not required to live up to the false standards they are faced with in the media. They need to call for fair, complete accounts that express all the talents and abilities they have to offer, not just their bodies.

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Appendix

Artist/Singer- Character is focused mainly on the performance of the song in studio or location setting. Little attention is paid to other characters for support.

Dancer- Character uses physical dexterity and/or highly choreographed dance steps while singing. Similar to musical style, he or she may lead others through narrative routine.

Actress/Actor-Character appears in musical and extra musical roles. He or she acts out a narrative of the song lyrics or video. He or she appears with costumes, props, and there may be interaction with supporting characters. The narrative may be cut in with singer images.

Lonely Lover- Character appears to be pining away for some other character, often in a song about lost love. He or she may claim to be unable to live without the lover.

Playboy/Seductress- Character is one man with women hanging all around him not really doing anything. There is an obvious uneven male to female ratio. Seductress character is the female version of the male playboy.

Occupation- The jobs were noted and later separated into male, female, or neutral categories.

Model- Character appears solely for purpose of displaying his or her physical attributes. He or she often wears revealing clothes and poses or dances in background. Sometimes close-ups of legs, chests, or other body parts create the impression that characters are props or pieces of scenery instead of real people.

Back-up Singer or Dancer- Character has performance talents as well as attractive body. He or she is often shown with the main character to enhance the performance.

Companion- Character appears as mate for main character or a recipient of romantic sentiments expressed in the song. He or she may also be the mate of the main character in a narrative setting.

Figure 1. Body size images (Stunkard et al., 1983)

