

“WE DON’T LOVE THESE HOES”
EXPLORING MISOGYNOIR AND BLACK MALE PATRIARCHY THROUGH
SEXUAL DOUBLE STANDARDS

By

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ABSTRACT

MARIAH ELIZABETH WEBBER. We Don't Love These Hoes: Exploring Misogynoir and Black Male Patriarchy Through Sexual Double Standards. (Under the direction of DR. ELIZABETH STEARNS)

While much research has been dedicated to exploring how Black people as a collective respond to racism, or how White women as collective respond to sexism, little empirical research has been found regarding the experiences of combatting both racism and sexism while being both Black and woman. The theoretical perspectives of Black feminist thought, intersectionality, and grounded theory are used as aides to the study of Black women's lived experiences and therefore central to this project. Using qualitative, open ended interviews, this thesis observes the ways in which misogynoir, Black male patriarchy, and controlling images reinforce sexual double standards and obstruct the sexual agency of collegiate Black women.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my mother, Malaika Webber, for giving me life and being my biggest supporter and encourager. A Black single mother chastised for her sexuality at 21. This work was created with your freedom in mind. I love you.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Black women often go overlooked and understudied in many facets of research. The unique experience of being both Black and woman presents a variety of issues that Black women are subjected to on a daily basis both outside of and within the Black community. These issues stem from ideologies such as misogynoir¹, controlling images of Black womanhood, and the intersections of identities that Black women hold. While much research has been dedicated to exploring how Black people as a collective respond to racism, or how white women respond to sexism, little empirical research has been found regarding the experiences of being both Black and woman. In addition, studies concerning the state of inequality that Black women face *within* the Black community as a result of internalized misogynoir, Black male patriarchy, and toxic masculinity have been researched in a mostly theoretical lens (Blair, 2014, Collins, 2000, Collins, 2005, Collins, 2015, hooks, 2004 Macias, 2015, Simms , 2001). Theoretical perspectives of Black feminist thought, intersectionality, and grounded theory are critical to the study of Black women's lived experiences.

The intersections of Black women's race and gender create social implications regarding how others interact with them and how they perceive themselves. Within this thesis, I will discuss the ways in which racism and sexism combine to form specific sexual criteria, known as controlling images, that Black women are held to both

¹ Misogynoir: anti-black misogyny. This term will be defined more extensively in subsequent sections of the paper.

implicitly and explicitly. These controlling images are manifested in every facet of Black women's lives, however, I specifically address how they are used to regulate Black women's sexual agency (i.e. the ability to decide one's sexual lifestyle for themselves without condemnation or interference) (Collins, 2005). Black women's sexual agency is important because everyone reserves the right to control their own bodies and act on their personal desires. In contrast, controlling images of Black womanhood and Black male patriarchy reinforce the ideology that Black women are to be controlled, which can lead to interpersonal and domestic violence, erasure of Black women's experiences and voices, and mental and emotional abuse (McGuffey, 2013).

Previous research concerning the effects of misogynoir on Black women's sexual experiences has been largely theoretical, although groundbreaking (Blair, 2014, Collins, 2000, Collins, 2005, Collins, 2015, hooks, 2004 Macias, 2015, Simms , 2001). Research concerning sexual double standards has been widely published, however, much of the literature neglects to consider the effects that intersecting identities can have on the body of literature, as they mostly focus on majority white samples (Crawford & Popp , 2003)(Gonzales & Rolison, 2005). This study intends to bridge together the theoretical work of Black feminist scholars with empirical, qualitative, sociological methodology. Although theoretical knowledge is important, being able to create research that assess the theoretical premises can strengthen the knowledge base, and confirm the existence of theorized trends within research based observation.

Using a three dimensional model of sexual double standards by Fasula, Carry, & Miller (2014), I intend to qualitatively examine the effects that misogynoir and Black male patriarchy can have on sexual double standards in the perspective and experiences

of Black, heterosexual millennials via and analysis of in-depth interviews. This study is important, as it gives voice to the direct experiences of Black women for Black women, by a Black woman researcher using sociological methodology. In the sections that follow, I examine the theoretical background of Black feminist thought, followed by the literature on intersectionality, misogynoir, controlling images of Black womanhood, Black male patriarchy and toxic masculinity, and the sexual double standard (SDS).

I use the theoretical background discussed as a premise to study whether or not Black collegiate freshman are subscribing to tenets of misogynoir, Black male patriarchy, and controlling images in terms of how they define their identity, sexual decisions, and potential partner criteria. In addition, the larger purpose of this study is to intertwine the methodological practice of sociology with the theoretical approaches of Black feminist theory in order to produce knowledge that promotes an inclusive and safe Black community. I conclude the paper by discussing my research design and findings, and their implications for the existing body of literature.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 BLACK FEMINIST THOUGHT

Black feminist thought is an ideology that specifically caters to the plight of Black women with a primary focus on collective liberation and justice. As described by prominent Black feminist theorist, Patricia Hill Collins, Black feminist thought serves as a theory that centers the experiences and knowledge of Black women combining both their racial and gender identity (Collins, 2000). Black feminist thought can be used to critically examine social institutions that impact Black women. The Combahee River Collective (CRC), an organization founded by Black feminists of varying sexual orientations in 1974, described Black feminism as necessary because, they believed that patriarchy and sexism were just as prevalent in Black women's lives as racism was. In addition, members of the CRC could not separate race and class from their oppression as White feminists had the privilege of doing, because they often experienced race, class, and gender oppression simultaneously (The Combahee River Collective, 1978).

Using Black Feminist thought as a theoretical lens ensures that the marginalized voices of Black women are fully heard, and the intersections of their identities are recognized and taken into consideration. This is critical because mainstream feminist thought primarily serves the voices of white women, while Black social and political thought primarily serves the interest of Black men. Within both schools of thought, the experiences and realities of Black women are negated and erased (Collins, 2000). In terms of observing the SDS, most scholarship has focused primarily on majority white participants, and therefore contained no acknowledgement of the ways differing cultural

ideologies can play a role in observing sexual double standards (Crawford and Popp, 2003).

In terms of sociological relevancy, in her article, “Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought,” Black feminist theorist and sociologist Patricia Hill Collins postulates that “sociologists might benefit greatly from serious consideration of the emerging, cross-disciplinary literature that is labeled Black feminist thought, precisely because, for many Afro-American female intellectuals, ‘marginality’ has been an excitement to creativity. As outsiders within, Black feminist scholars may be one of many distinct groups of marginal intellectuals whose standpoints promise to enrich contemporary sociological discourse” (Collins, 1986). Collins asserts that utilizing Black feminist thought in sociological research offers a space for Black women to (1) define themselves, for themselves, (2) address the intersections of oppression through a sociological lens and (3) highlight the importance of Black women’s culture when conducting research (Collins, 1986). Using Black feminist thought as a theoretical lens to sociologically explore the effects of misogynoir and Black male patriarchy on sexual double standards in prospective Black heterosexual relationship patterns will provide an appropriate perspective and center the voices of marginalized Black women.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the sections that follow, I examine the literature regarding intersectionality, misogynoir, controlling images of Black womanhood, Black male patriarchy and toxic masculinity, and sexual double standards. An analysis regarding these themes is critical, as the contexts that surround Black women's societal image is important when considering how they are perceived in heterosexual relationship patterns, particularly intraracially. Intersectionality and misogynoir frame the ways in which Black women's oppression move beyond the scope of separate theories of race and gender. Controlling images of Black womanhood encompass the historical perceptions of Black women in America, beginning with slavery, to provide context behind the stereotypes attributed to them in present day. Black male patriarchy and toxic masculinity act as the bind for these bodies of research by perpetuating gender roles that reinforce misogynoir, controlling images of Black womanhood, and sexual double standards.

3.1. INTERSECTIONALITY: A MAJOR KEY

The term "intersectionality" was coined by scholar and activist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989: however, Black feminists and Womanists as early as, and probably before Sojourner Truth and her infamous "Ain't I A Woman" speech in 1851, have been addressing the erasure of Black women's experiences at the hands of Black men, white men, and white women (Truth, 1851). Intersectionality, in this context, can be defined as the different ways that race and gender can combine and interact in order to shape Black

women's exposure and navigation in society (Crenshaw, 1993). Discussing the history and functionality of intersectionality, Crenshaw states, "intersectionality is an analytic sensibility, a way of thinking about identity and its relationship to power. Originally articulated on behalf of Black women, the term brought to light the invisibility of many constituents within groups that claim them as members, but often fail to represent them" (Crenshaw, 2015).

Intersectionality helps us to understand the distinct ways that society perceives individuals based on their identities. According to Black feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins (2015), intersectionality is important, as it proposes that race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, nation, ethnicity, and other identity characteristics cannot be studied separately, but rather must be observed in combination with one another. This is especially important for Black women who often underwent erasure in movements such as the Black Liberation Movement and the Black Power Movement (Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 2001). This erasure also occurs in the modern Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, against the desires of its queer, Black women founders. Much of the Black community uses the BLM movement as a vehicle to prioritize community response to state sanctioned murders of Black men such as Freddie Gray, while simultaneously forming defenses for the violence perpetuated against Black women such as Sandra Bland and Korryn Gaines (Macias, 2015). In addition, Black mothers, wives, daughters, and friends of slain Black men are delegitimized, discredited, and marginalized within the media and court systems as exhibited in the Trayvon Martin trial through the inappropriate cross examination of Rachel Jeantal, the last person to speak with Trayvon before his death (Macias, 2015).

Intersectionality is especially critical when discussing the “pathologization and criminalization” of Black women’s sexual and relationship behaviorism (Blair, 2014). Black women’s sexual behavior is regulated by the Black community at a much stricter capacity than Black men’s sexual behavior as a result of the intersections of their identities. As women, they are placed in a double bind, wherein they are perceived as either promiscuous “Jezebels” for being too sexually expressive or “prudish bitches” for not being sexually explicit enough (Collins, 2000, Collins, 2005, Wilkins, 2012). I draw on intersectionality as way to understand why taking gender into account when discussing the sexual politics of Black women within groups, particularly the Black community, is important. The erasure of the impact of gender on Black women’s lived experiences, especially as it applies to sex and relationships, is often left understudied within mainstream academia.

3.2. MISOGYNOIR: BRANDED FOR BLACK WOMEN

Because the usage of the term misogyny does not directly speak to the lived experiences of Black women, the term *misogynoir* is more appropriate. Most literature on the term *misogynoir* is not scholarly by the standards of mainstream academia, but is rather formulated by Black feminist and womanists using their voices through blogging, such as this excerpt by Trudy of the Gradient Lair, a womanist blog (Trudy, 2014)²:

² Retrieved from Gradient Lair:
<http://www.gradientlair.com/post/84107309247/definemisogynoir-anti-black-misogyny-moya-bailey-coined>

“Misogynoir is a word used to describe how racism and anti-Blackness alter the experience of misogyny for Black women, *specifically*. It alludes to specifically [sic] Black women’s experiences with gender and how both racism and anti-Blackness alters that experience diametrically from White women (as anti-Blackness and White supremacy make White women the “norm” in terms of intersectional experiences with gender, even as solely via gender, misogyny harms all women) and differently from non-Black women of color (as though they face racism, the dehumanization associated with anti-Blackness is more than racism or sexualized objectification alone, but speaks to the history of Black bodies and lives treated as those of non-persons)” (Trudy, 2014).

Queer Black feminist Moya Bailey coined the term, and described it as, “the unique ways in which Black women are pathologized in popular culture.” “What happens to Black women in public spaces isn’t about them being a woman of color,” Bailey says, “it is particular and has to do with the ways that anti-Blackness and misogyny combine to malign Black women in our world” (Bailey, 2014). Although, misogynoir is a major key in comprehension when thinking about the ways that Black women are oppressed through social institutions, the term has only been legitimized by a few scholars. Although there are few academic references to this term, the necessity of usage isn’t negated (Bailey, 2013). Marginalized groups often create terminology that specifically reflects the erasure of their experiences in mainstream academic and professional thought.

While Black men may experience the harsh effects of racism and white women may experience sexism, Black women experience the combination of both due to the

intersections of their identities. I am specifically interested in researching the implications of the term misogynoir, as the definition of the word directly stems from erasure of the intersections of Black women's identities when considering sexism enacted against women. The lack of research and peer-reviewed articles that directly refer to and study misogynoir speaks to the critical need of this research. Using empirical, sociological methodology to study whether or not misogynoir exists within the Black community can have implications for further academic research, as misogynoir specifically highlights the intricate ways in which Black women deal with sexism and racism within and outside of their own racial group. Expanding the literature review to include terms not necessarily widespread throughout academia serves as a form of recognition for Black feminist theorist unable to gain access to the ivory tower of formal education. This form of research also gives way for the experiences of Black women to be validated while simultaneously serving as a method of resistance towards oppression, following the traditions of Black feminist scholars both past and present and standpoint epistemology.

3.3 CONTROLLING IMAGES OF BLACK WOMANHOOD

Black Americans have historically been subjected to systematic, sexualized racism. Over the years, racism and sexism alike have transitioned in social institutions from being overt to covert. Controlling images of Black womanhood are no exception to this phenomenon in that these images have been normalized such that they are not seen as problematic and dangerous. Controlling images of Black womanhood stem from 15th-century slavery. White slaveholders and slave handlers used methods of dehumanization in order to justify their occupation of African lands, as well as their usage of human

bodies for capitalistic gain. Negative depictions of African people were created by whites in an effort to not only justify their cruel actions, but to encourage Blacks to justify their own insubordination. Fasula, Carry, and Miller (2014) postulate that controlling images work to reinforce the stereotypes that reinforce the negative stigmatization of Black women in society. For Black women specifically, sexually restrictive depictions appeared in the form controlling images, one among them being the Jezebel (Collins, 2005). From this controlling image, a more modern image known as the Black Lady was also created as a way to shame and control Black women. By using controlling images as a stereotype, society can place the onus of Black women's vast disadvantages to their inability to adhere towards appropriate femininity, rather than addressing systematic inequity. Interestingly enough, scholars who study controlling images of Black womanhood contest that these stereotypes are essentially the antithesis, or the inability to fully achieve, docile, soft, White femininity.

The Jezebel image was created to foster the ideology that Black women are “unfeminine aggressive, challenging to the patriarchal family structure, and lacking sexual control” (Fasula et. Al 2014). This idea that Black women were hypersexual was used to justify sexual violence and sexual breeding of Black women in the plantation South. White slave owners would sexually abuse, rape, and use Black women for “breeding” purposes. By creating this image, they could claim that Black women in fact enjoyed these experiences and looked forward to being sexually pleased in any way made available to them. Whether or not Black women consented to these sexual advances was not considered. In addition, the Jezebel image was not only perpetuated via personal interaction, but was recorded throughout ideological scientific, political, religious, and

popular literature texts (Simms, 2001). Keeping this in mind, it can be said that controlling images remain prevalent today because of their permeation into American social institutions by way of proslavery ideology.

The Jezebel image characterizes Black women as hypersexual, and therefore in dire need of patriarchal control, domination, or exploitation. Some scholars perceive the Jezebel image as a way for Black women to obtain sexual liberation, however, while Black women may be able to utilize their perceived overt sexuality in an explorative way, they also balance the exploration of their sexuality with the Black community's restrictive view of them as racial and cultural protectors (McGuffey, 2013). Because of policing via Black communities, Black women may feel as though they are exhibiting poor attributes of their racial group and stereotypical tropes, which, according to the Black community, could have harmful effects on the race as a whole (Fasula et al., 2014). For example, in Johnson's (2013) study, Black women adamantly expressed negative reactions towards being perceived as overtly sexual, often trying their best to live in a way that kept them clear of being labeled as overtly sexual or masculine.

Although the term Jezebel isn't used in current African American Vernacular English (AAVE), youth use terms such as hoe, whore, hoochie, and THOT (that hoe over there). Although not restricted completely for Black women, these terms can have particularly negative connotations towards Black women given the historical context of the demonization and repression of their sexuality and are enhanced by racial undertones. These terms restrict Black women's expression of self by placing boundaries on how, where, and with whom they are allowed to be sexual. These more modern terms used in daily interactions and media, constantly reinforce many Black women's need to adjust

their outward appearance and conduct to avoid being labeled. In accordance with this ideology, a study observed collegiate Black women's disdain towards masculine behavior, or not acting "lady like," as a result of internal values instilled by their Black male fathers (Johnson, 2013). Black collegiate women within the study expressed strict protest of any action that was outside of maintaining socially accepted, normative, feminine performance. Much like the era of slavery, Black women and girls are penalized and ostracized for their loudness throughout social institutions and within their communities, so they must adjust their behavior accordingly in order to receive acceptance (Morriss, 2007). This is because Black women who are open and expressive about their sexuality are still shamed, labeled, and othered by the Black community.

According to Collins (2000), the middle class image of the Black Lady in contradiction to the working class Jezebel image. The Black lady image emerged as a way to control the sexual expression of Black women and to encourage them to aspire to "lady like behavior" rather than promiscuous, "classless" behavior. The Black Lady image provides a respectable image of Black womanhood in contrast to Black women's sexual promiscuity. Not only does the Black Lady image represent sexuality, but it also pits the proposed sexual ideologies of the middle class against those of working class origins (Collins, 2005).

This image was fostered by the Black community in an effort to use respectability politics, or assimilation to the norms of the white culture, as a form of resistance to their own oppression (Harris, 2015). The Black Lady image tells Black women exactly who they should be: one who speaks properly, has an accomplished job, is respectable, and sexually modest (Collins, 2005). This image is the exact opposite of the Jezebel, and in

some cases, it is used as the standard for Black womanhood. In “The Gamemanship of Sex,” Eyre et al. (1998) found that adolescent Blacks identified sex early in courtship, or even under romantic circumstances as demeaning, grounds for a tarnished reputation, and therefore unladylike. Johnson (2013) postulates that Black women use respectability politics and the image of Black Lady as a way to gain cultural capital. By assimilating to acceptable ideals of femininity, Black women can be upwardly mobile and foster respect from their community members (Johnson, 2013). While this defense mechanism may appear to provide changes, they are only temporary and ineffective at promoting acceptance of Black women within the Black community. In order to formulate a critical understanding of how Black women’s sexuality is perceived within Black, collegiate, heterosexual relationships today, it is important to consult the source of anti-Black woman ideology (Harris, 2015). Collins’ theoretical contribution of the controlling images of the Jezebel and Black Lady can provide a solid foundation for empirical, qualitative research.

The purpose of this work is to link the theoretical to the empirical. While Collins’ controlling images may serve as media concepts theoretically, many Black feminists scholars postulate that these images are projected into outward life experiences. By linking college students’ experiences with the sexual double standard with Collins’ controlling images of Black womanhood, we can gain understanding concerning whether or not these images are actually reinforced as described by her theoretical framework.

3.4. BLACK MALE PATRIARCHY AND TOXIC MASCULINITY

Although theoretical perspectives have largely focused on the ways that Black women have been oppressed, little literature highlights the ways in which Black male patriarchy and toxic masculinity enforce Black Women's oppression. bell hooks', *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (2004), describes Black men as victims of imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, wherein they are essentially taught by white men to associate manhood with the ability to conquer and control. Black male patriarchy places restrictions on the ways that Black women can operate in their own bodies and give Black men ownership, control and domination over Black women's bodies. The presence of ownership and control was analyzed in Hurt et al.'s (2013) study where 79 percent of Black male respondents expressed that Black women were disproportionately single because of their unwillingness to subscribe to patriarchal gender roles and 37 percent of Black male respondents attributed singleness to Black women being too strong and independent.

In addition to ownership and control, Black male patriarchy centers the needs of Black men while pushing the needs of Black women to the margins (Watson, Robinson, Dispenza, & Nazari, 2012). Because of an ideology that centers Black men's marginalizations, Black feminism and Womanism are seen as schools of thought that serve to separate the Black community, rather than unify it. This exhibited in the backlash Black feminists and Womanists have received through various social media platforms. This is contradictory, as most platforms regarding racial equity for the Black community largely served the needs of Black males, while subjecting Black women as helpmates, motherly figures, and accessories (Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 2001).

Black males' control over Black female bodies is socialized as early as adolescence. In Eyre et al. (1998), Black boys were encouraged to have sex with several partners in order to prove that they were not feminine, while Black girls were labeled as "ho, slut, hoochie, trick, tramp, or toss-up," for being sexually active. Black men's ability to objectify and label Black women negatively for sexual expression while simultaneously being lauded for their own sexual conquests is a direct result of patriarchal ideology. Black male patriarchy therefore gives cisgender, heterosexual, Black males privilege and power within their communities, and affirms them as the dominant group. In this way, Black male patriarchy directly parallels white, hegemonic masculinity. However, Black male patriarchy differs slightly, as it uses Black men's racial oppression as an excuse to ignore the violence they perpetuate against Black women, Black queer folk, and Black trans folk. Many researchers argue that Black men manipulate power and control through patriarchy as a way to gain back power taken from them in larger society (Dungee-Anderson & Cox, 2000). Black men use their racial status as both an excuse for their violence and defense against accusations of perpetuating violence. In this sense, Black male patriarchy forces Black women to disregard violence and control perpetuated by Black men for the greater sake of the Black community.

3.5. THE SEXUAL DOUBLE STANDARD

Within heterosexual dating interactions, a sexual double standard often arises that prioritizes men's desires over women's. According to Connell (1987), the sexual double standard (SDS) is the idea that men are granted more freedom and control to engage in their heterosexual interactions than women are. Literature regarding the sexual double

standard has encompassed both qualitative and quantitative research methods, with qualitative methods heavily focused on interviews and focus groups, ethnographies, and language and discourse analysis (Crawford & Popp, 2003). A major gap exists in the study of the SDS, with few studies addressing the impact of race and cultural identity on the SDS. Controlling images of Black womanhood, misogynoir, and Black male patriarchy all intersect in ways that racialize dating interactions and sexual encounters for Blacks, in essence leaving a large area of research untouched.

Fasula, Carry, and Miller (2014) created a multidimensional framework for observing the SDS in terms of U.S. Black women's sexual health. This framework included three dimensions: polarized heterosexualities, active male and passive female roles, and the power struggle narrative, with each dimension made applicable to Black women (Fasula, Carry, & Miller, 2014). Polarized heterosexualities are described as what society considers to be normal and abnormal for males and females in terms of their sexuality (Fasula, Carry, & Miller, 2014). The authors compare the 'good girl/bad girl dichotomy' for women, with the 'real man/wimp dichotomy' for men. This good girl/bad girl dichotomy directly mirrors Collins' (2003) comparison between the controlling image of the jezebel and the Black lady and the real man/wimp dichotomy is representative of Black male patriarchy referenced in hooks (2004) *We Real Cool*, wherein Black males are socialized to identify as a 'real man' by any means necessary, even if that means resorting to abuse (emotional, mental, sexual, physical) or violence.

The second dimension, active male and passive female roles refers to the appropriate way that males and females are to interact with each other in sexual situations (Fasula, Carry, & Miller, 2014). Black women are expected to subordinate their needs

to the needs of men sexually, and be passive, as described with the controlling image of the Black lady. Whereas Black women who are assertive, put their sexual needs first, and hold men accountable for their actions are, according to Fasula, Carry, and Miller (2014), paralleling the controlling image of Collins' Jezebel (Collins, 2005) by contesting patriarchy and centering themselves and their desires. The last dimension, the power struggle narrative describes how the SDS characterizes men and women's sexualities as being in opposition of one another as a way to vie for power. These three dimensions help to form an objective method of studying the SDS and contextualize the SDS in a way that is applicable to intraracial Black heterosexual relationships. This is important as "a tailored analysis of the meaning of the SDS for young Black women can help explain how social systems of gender and racial inequality contribute to these disparities." (Fasula, Carry, and Miller, 2014)

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

The purpose of this study is to study whether Black collegiate freshman subscribe to tenets of misogynoir, Black male patriarchy, and controlling images in terms of how they define their identity, sexual decisions, and potential partner criteria. Consequently, I use qualitative semi-structured interviews in order to gain a thorough understanding of individual experiences. Although little research has directly observed how sexual double standards vary based on race, this form of methodology was inspired by C. Shawn McGuffey's (2013) "Rape and Racial Appraisals" study. Within this study, McGuffey interviewed 111 Black women to observe their experiences concerning interpersonal violence with Black men. Although my research topic is different, the methodology is similar in that it involves Black women's experiences within their communities, and studies controlling images of Black womanhood. As exhibited within the McGuffey article, I did not intend to initiate conversations directly concerning controlling images, Black male patriarchy, or misogynoir: instead, I will rely on participants to make mention of tenets that align with the concepts of my study.

The target population of my study will be Black, collegiate freshmen enrolled at the large public university in the Southeast. Participants identified as Black, heterosexual, and must be classified as a freshman/first year students. Students outside of the aforementioned criteria were not eligible for participation in the study. Exclusion based on race is necessary, as I am specifically interested in observing sexual double standards that exist within the Black community. In addition, I am specifically targeting freshman students, given that these participants are able to speak about their experiences and ideas

freely; the younger respondents are, more steadfast they are in the validity of their ideas. College is an exploratory phase in terms of relationships and sexuality. By using college students as my sample, I hope to achieve a wide variety of anecdotes regarding the sexual double standard and Black gender role. Students are also often familiar with media examples that may allude to Collins' controlling images of Black womanhood. Much research discusses the sexual double standard without taking race into consideration.

The terms "misogynoir" and "Black male patriarchy" are specific to Black culture, and therefore information must only be gathered from individuals who identify as Black. I feel as though this population will provide me with honest and direct answers concerning the culture of young Black adult opinions regarding gender and sexuality. The sample size included 10 students, 5 males and 5 females, all of whom self-identified their gender, and their race as Black Americans³, heterosexual, and cisgender. Interviewing both genders provides both a perspective from prospective victims and perpetrators of misogynoir and Black male patriarchy. However, in accordance with Black feminist thought, the Black female voice, as the primary marginalized group, is centered. I have chosen to not be specific towards whether respondents are African American, as misogynoir and Black male patriarchy have been shown to persist throughout the African diaspora, not just African Americans (McGuffey , 2013).

I obtained participants through attending Spring 2017 Introduction to Sociology classes, and gave recruitment presentations for my study within courses mostly made up of freshman students. I disclosed within the presentation that participants must be a first

³ I use Black American here to be inclusive of the African diaspora. Using African American is limiting to Blacks only born in America.

year student, at least 18 years of age, who identify as Black and heterosexual. After disclosing information about the study, I waited after class to sign up students for participation. Students provided a name, email, and telephone number on a sign-up sheet for contact. I visited two Intro to Sociology course to recruit and utilized snowball sampling to recruit participants from those who signed up. Each participant received follow ups via email, and then via text (if there is no response via email) to set up an appropriate time for an interview.

Interviews were conducted in person, recorded, and additional on-site notes were taken for reference. The duration of the interviews lasted an average of 33 minutes each. The shortest interview lasting 20 minutes and the longest interview lasting 51 minutes. I conducted interviews in individual, private, library rooms. Within the interview, each participant signed a consent form that explained the purpose of the interview, the participants' right to not answer questions or revoke their participation, and confidentiality statements. Interviews were recorded via voice recorder and then transcribed, as disclosed in the consent form. Following the signing of the consent form, participants were asked to answer a series of questions in interview format.

Research questions were formulated in order to ascertain information regarding stereotypes/controlling images of Black women, differing sexual standards for Black males versus Black females, ideologies of respectability, and intracommunity gender strain (See Appendix I). Questions were separated into three categories: identity, intraracial gender strain, and sexual double standards. Identity questions are aimed at obtaining respondents' ideas around their identity, the identity of members of the opposite gender, and the identity of the Black community as a whole. Respondents'

opinions on identity reflect how they view themselves, and other members of their community. Intra-racial gender strain questions are designed to obtain responses concerning whether or not tension exists between Black men and Black women, both generally and within dating scenarios. Questions concerning respectability are posed as most of the literature refers to members of the Black community assimilating to traditional gender roles and attitudes. Lastly, sexual double standard questions are based on Fasula, Carry, and Miller's (2014) multidimensional framework including polarized heterosexualities, the power struggle narrative, and active male/passive female roles; keeping misogynoir and Black male patriarchy in mind.

In conjunction with the interview questions, I also presented memes, or "humorous images, video, text, etc. that is copied (often with slight variations) and spread rapidly by Internet users," (Oxford English Dictionary, 1998) in order to gather direct insight on participants' opinions concerning memes that reinforce misogynoir and controlling images of Black womanhood (See Appendix II). Each meme represented ideologies of Black male patriarchy, misogynoir, respectability politics, and a comparison between the controlling images of the Black Lady and the Jezebel.

All participants were given consent forms and IRB approval was obtained before the interviews were conducted. After conducting the interviews, I transcribed them into the NVIVO software and code them into reoccurring themes and patterns. Drawing from the perspectives of Black Feminist theory, I took field notes concerning whether or not participant's responses had elements of misogynoir and Black male patriarchy. In addition, I accounted for themes that arose from participants on their own, many of which also aligned with tenets of Black feminist theory. Open ended questions were asked to

generate participant's full and honest responses; a prodding technique was utilized by the research to ascertain further elaboration of participant responses. At the close of the interview, participant confidentiality was reassured by explaining that students' names would not be used in the study and defining characteristics will be changed in order to assure anonymity. I also clarified that if they were recruited via a sociology class, their participation in the study was in no way linked to the class, as the interview does not count for class credit of any form. There was no follow up after the interview, however I provided my contact information in the event that the participant desired further contact.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

Via qualitative interviewing I sought to determine whether or Black, collegiate freshmen were invested in perpetuating various forms of misogynoir, Black male patriarchy, and sexual double standards. I also measured their responses to images that invoked controlling images of Black womanhood. Although I was specifically looking to measure indications of strain between the image of the Black Lady and that of the Jezebel, many other controlling images emerged from the interviews. Analysis of the interviews revealed that each respondent held beliefs about Black women's sexuality that had traces of misogynoir. The following sections includes a discussion of themes that emerged from interviewing.

5.1. THEMES

Themes were both predetermined based on key terms from the literature review and decided based on themes that emerged within the interviews on their own. As interviews were conducted, field notes were taken. If participants' responses reflected any of the terms I sought to explore, a note was made. After completing all 10 interviews, a compiled list of recurring major themes was created and coded for via NVIVO. Interview questions concerning Black identity and the three dimensions of sexual double standards, in combination with memes that clearly contained tenets of controlling images made for excellent, ambiguous conversation starters. Both the identity of the participants and the themes are discussed below.

| NAME | SELF-IDENTIFIED GENDER | CLASSIFICATION |
|---------------|------------------------|----------------|
| RESPONDENT 1 | FEMALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 2 | FEMALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 3 | FEMALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 4 | FEMALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 5 | MALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 6 | MALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 7 | MALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 8 | MALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 9 | MALE | FRESHMAN |
| RESPONDENT 10 | FEMALE | FRESHMAN |

Fig. 1. Respondent Demographic Descriptives

5.1.1.1. SEXUAL DOUBLE STANDARDS

Given that this study sought to observe evidence of Black male patriarchy and misogynoir via questions concerning sexual double standards, it is only appropriate to begin by discussing the evidence that occurred in relation to the SDS. It was important to discuss the racial implications within the different responses from questions concerning sexual double standards.

5.1.1.1. POLARIZED HETEROSEXUALITIES

Most all of the respondents were able to recognize that there were different standards that men and women were held to in regard to sexual behavior; however, their views still reinforced the belief that men and women's sexualities were totally different and therefore those standards were normative. Take for example a quote from freshman, male student, Respondent 9:

Interviewer: Is there an impact on the way you view a Black man if he has multiple heterosexual partners?

R9: Uh not really because double standards, so like if my friend tells me he's had sex with multiple girls I don't really judge him or anything. But that's somebody that...oh dang yeah well it is a double standard. So I guess I don't view guys as a hoe or whatever as I would a female like if she's out in public doing it you know? If it's in private that's your business, but like when everybody starts to get to know and word gets around I guess that's when your name, that's how you're viewed I guess.

Here we see that the respondent was aware of double standards in regards to his views concerning women while still subscribing to them. Similarly, Respondent 8 viewed sexual double standards in the same light.

R8: I don't know. I just believe just any type just is weird to have a whole bunch of partners.

Interviewer: Okay so do you feel that way for black men and black women? Like it's weird to have a lot of partners?

R8: See that's where like I don't know. That's where I like differ because you know I'm like a man obviously. So I would view a guy like, I feel like a lot of people do this too, like I would view a guy as more like he's a pimp, or he's like the man or something. But if I see a woman doing the exact same thing I'm a hypocrite and I'd be like you know that's messed up.

In comparison, women respondents also noticed the differences between expectations held for men and women's sexual expression but responded in a way that pointed to the hypocrisy of polarized heterosexualities.

Interviewer: Ok um. Is there an impact on the way you would view a Black woman if she was sexually assertive? So she was forthright with what she wanted sexually?

R9: Um like in public or private?

Interviewer: You can talk about both

R9: I feel like in public that more, like a woman would start getting viewed as a hoe, because she's like always talking about sex. But in private no I don't think anything is wrong with that like she, I mean sex is for both people so if she likes something then she should say I guess so...

Interviewer: Okay what about for Black men? Is there an impact on the way you would view a Black man if he was sexually assertive?

R9: No. I think that's a part of the double standard. So I feel like guys talk about it more because I feel that a lot of women are shy, well not shy, but they just don't want to be looked down upon so that's why they wouldn't. So if they won't then who will so I guess it has to be the guy who does it. So I guess that's why it's not looked down upon as much so...

Female identified Respondent 3 also felt that women's sexuality is policed heavily by society:

R3: Okay. I personally don't care about that, you're supposed to do what makes you happy so if that like, those many sexual partners are filling a void in her life obviously there's like I guess something going on that she's not talking about. Or maybe it just makes her happy to do that? So I wouldn't think badly of her.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you think other people would?

R3: Yes, because I guess for a woman sex is frowned upon. And it should only be done for reproduction and that's not who we are, like we're sexual human beings so.

The differences in reactions between men and women respondents concerning sexual relations with multiple partners revealed that both genders were aware of the

sexual double standard. Women more so than men believed that sexual double standards were unfair. This supports Fasula et. al's (2014) premise of a binary between men and women's sexual behaviors. Here we see a binary that helps to perpetuate a continuation of the sexual double standard that affects women's sexual agency. Men describe an acknowledgement, yet continuation of the polarized heterosexualities while women were seemingly trying to be rid of it.

5.1.1.2. ACTIVE MALE/PASSIVE FEMALE ROLES

To determine whether or not respondents subscribed to belief systems, I asked them questions concerning which partner, man or woman, was to be the aggressor in sexual conquests such as intercourse (See Appendix I). According to the literature, sexuality, or the performance of sexuality is gendered. The idea that men should be active in sexual interaction while women should be docile and passive repeatedly represented within the interview responses. For example, this response from female identified

Respondent 1:

Interviewer: Mhm. Ok alright. Um is there an impact on the way you would view a Black woman if she was sexually assertive? So she was very outright with her sexual experiences and...

R1: Um I think I'd admire it. Um because there's so much shame, not necessarily specifically on black women but just women in general to like not be able to express themselves sexually. And so I think that it's a big step for a woman to be able to say, "yes I'm engaging in sexual activity. Yes, I'm enjoying it. And I'm not afraid to talk about it."

Researcher: Okay. And what about for Black men? Is there an impact on the way you would view a Black man if he was sexually assertive?

R1: Um I don't think so. I think that that's more normalized. So it's something that I would expect.

The majority of Black male identified respondents acknowledged a culture that promoted men assume the “dominant” role in sexual interactions, while women are to remain passive like this statement made by male identified Respondent 8.

Interviewer: Okay so who is responsible for directing sexual interactions during intercourse? So like you're in the act and you're okay so going to do this, this, and this? Who is responsible for making those decisions?

R8: Most if its I guess what you call it, improvisation. But I guess the guy.

Interviewer: Okay. And why would you say the guy?

R8: Because it's supposed to be the male dominant. The male dominant makes it.

Interestingly enough, some male identified respondents claimed that women were too passive during sexual interactions while still holding on to ideals of male dominance and female subservience as seen in this response from male identified Respondent 5:

Interviewer: Is there an impact on the way you would view a Black woman if she was sexually assertive? So like she knew what she wanted sexually.

R5: No there is no view. Well okay there's not a negative view. I would find that attractive personally. So I mean I don't like passive females that expect just to be told what to do all the time and expect you to take charge, and have the stereotypical what strong is supposed to be and all this and that. So I feel like its two-way thing. If you want to then you can, if I want to then I will.

Both male and female identified respondents typically agreed that there needed to be someone that established themselves as the dominant individual within sexual interactions. In other words, although they did not all agree that male identified persons

should always lead sexual interactions, they did subscribe dominant and submissive roles over egalitarian sexual interactions. Given that most respondents subscribed to dominant vs. submissive roles during sexual interactions, one begins to wonder whether those roles are implicitly gendered. Both male and female respondents, when prodded, discussed that sexual interactions were most often/typically lead by men. Take for example this response from female identified Respondent 10:

Interviewer: Okay. Who is responsible for directing sexual interactions during intercourse? So like you're about to have sex and directing who does what and how they do it.

R10: I guess it could go either way. It just depends on who's more assertive I guess. But typically a man.

Respondent 10 thought that sexual interactions could go either way, however most typically those interactions were initiated by men. This trend was represented in large number of the interviews by both male and female identified respondents. From this it can be made evident that while respondents may not explicitly subscribe to gender roles in terms of sexual interactions, implicitly they still recognize and agree that they are perpetuated through society.

5.1.1.3. POWER STRUGGLE NARRATIVE: INTRARACIAL GENDER TENSION AND INTERRACIAL DATING

The power struggle narrative defines members of the opposite sex in strong opposition and competition with one another. The theme of the power struggle narrative emerged from Fasula et al's (2014) study concerning racialized sexual double standards. It postulates that men and women essentially use one another to get what they want.

Given that Black men are in closer proximity to privilege via Black male patriarchy, they often manipulate Black women as a means to both reflect and gain additional power and prestige. This is represented in male Respondent 9, who discussed how men on campus were interested in finding women who had not been “passed around.”

Interviewer: Okay I understand. In your opinion is there a gender difference concerning who is more likely to be targets of sexual coercion? So who is more likely to be talked into sex?

R9: Um a woman because on campus seeing like dudes want to have but they want, I guess like to discover a new female who's having sex? If that makes sense? Just not someone who's always been out there who everyone has had sex with and so they like talk to that girl or whatever and then they're chilling that night or whatever and they try and talk them into it. I don't think I've ever heard of a situation where a female was trying to have sex with a dude and he didn't want to so yeah.

Here Respondent 9 boasts about the potential clout that can come from having sexual interactions with a woman who is presumably pristine. This serves to further sexually objectify women as sexual conquests as well as give positive recognition to women who are virginal and “pure,” as a means to shame those who are not. Some respondents believed that women were also able to seduce men into sexual interactions at the same rate as men. Take for example this response from male identified Respondent 7.

Interviewer: Okay. In your opinion is there a gender difference concerning who is more likely to be targets of sexual coercion?

R7: I mean I would say females just; I don't know if I have a reason for why I say females. Yeah I would just say females. Potential differences in defenselessness. But at the same time no, I would say males are just as coerced because of the ability to succumb to women's sexual charms. So both are likely I guess it'd be harder I guess since I don't know. I'd say females, but at the same one I'd say both have the potential to be coerced whether they know it or not

In addition to a power struggle between men and women in terms of sexual coercion, many respondents discussed how a power struggle existed specifically within the Black community. The interracial dating was a theme that emerged from a trend in the coding upon asking respondents if they felt there was tension or strain between Black men and Black women (See Appendix D). Interracial dating was not a theme that I anticipated would come up in the data; however, even though interracial dating was not referenced at all in the interview schedule, 8 out of 10 respondents that were interviewed brought it up.

Interviewer: Okay cool. Have you ever felt discriminated upon by members of the opposite sex in your race group?

R3: Yeah sometimes black men do be bashing women, like black women all the time. But um a lot of it I guess um is learned behavior. So like how other people treat black women kind of, black men see that and then they decide to get on the train, and it can't be like that.

Interviewer: Mhmm okay so like who-who are other people?

R3: So like white men. Just um I guess like the more predominant race in America, so like white people. Kind of bash black women.

Interviewer: Can you um kind of give some example of like that bashing?

R3: Um they will say that like you know our hair is ugly, it's like wool and matted and nasty, but then like Kylie Jenner or someone like that ill pull the same things and it chic and retro and they're creating this new style. We don't get enough credit for a lot of the things that people (sic). Like people wanna be black women but don't wanna acknowledge why or the reasons.

Black male identified respondents also agreed that there was tension within the Black community regarding interracial dating, as exemplified below.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you feel as though Black men and Black women are pitted against one another? Why or why not?

R6: Sometimes. Um just like on the standards we're supposed to have. Like you know um...Some like my grandma, she's really strict about like if I liked a white girl then she would be upset with that. But, you know, and then like saying Black women don't get enough love and stuff like that. It's really just, I guess, who's saying it, because to me you know I haven't experienced anything like that. So I'm pretty comfortable like with whatever. I don't know. I don't know how to say it. Do you get what I'm saying?

Interviewer: I don't get what you're saying. So you're saying um, you're pretty comfortable with like black women? Or you're pretty comfortable with dating women outside of your race?

R6: I'm like comfortable really with anything. But um I feel like we are kind of pitted against each other because people expect me to like marry another black woman so um...it's just like I guess the expectation society sets. But I do think like we're kind of pitted against each sometimes.

Hints of misogynoir were also found within responses that discussed interracial dating, and preference for White women over Black women. A female identified respondent had this to say about how Black men malign Black women within their dating preferences.

Interviewer: Have you ever felt discriminated upon by members of the opposite sex in your race group? So have you ever felt discriminated upon by black men?

R10: Discriminate? What do you mean like that term?

Interviewer: Because you are a black woman do you feel as though black men think negatively about you or things of that nature, because of your identity as black woman?

R10: Mostly no, but I have run into some cases where a conversation would stir up about a black man being with a black woman or a white woman and the guy would say a white woman. Because I don't knock interracial relationships but at the same time it's like um why wouldn't you want black woman? So yeah sometimes I run into cases when they would prefer a white woman over a black woman.

Interviewer: Okay and do you wanna talk about like the reasons why they would say that or?

R10: Of course I've asked why, um its usually been like white women are more gullible, or black women are more ratchet, yeah.

Interviewer: And sorry because we're doing interviews, how would you define ratchet?

R10: Ratchet? Um obnoxious and loud, just carefree. No type of bedside manner.

In addition to having to deal with the normative strains of the SDS, such as vying for power between men and women, respondents, particularly Black women, found themselves in competition with one another and members of other races for attractiveness and potential partners. This supports theoretical claims of Black women feeling as though they have to assimilate to the norms of white femininity in order to be deemed as desirable.

5.1.2. CONTROLLING IMAGES OF BLACK WOMANHOOD

The significant indications of misogynoir, internalized misogynoir, Black male patriarchy, and respectability politics were found when respondents made mention of differing tenets of controlling images of Black womanhood. The following excerpts are responses from respondents viewing memes, which depicted Black women in various forms as well as responses to questions loaded with sexual double standards from the interview schedule. Many respondents, both male and female identified, encouraged the policing of the behavior, bodies, or identity of Black women. Responses ranged from completely agreeing with the images and wording that were presented, to agreeing with the wording but not the images that were presented. At any rate, each participant interviewed agreed with the content of memes in some fashion. Although this study

specifically only sought to discuss the controlling images of the Black Lady and the Jezebel, many more came out in data collection as exemplified below.

5.1.2.1. THE STRONG BLACK WOMAN

During the identity portion of the interviews, when defining Black womanhood, many respondents immediately associated Black womanhood with strength and endurance. Both male and female identified respondents remarked on black women's strength and ability to handle challenges as a positive attribute. Take for example this response from a male identified respondent:

Interviewer: Okay that makes sense. What does it mean to be a Black woman? What is black womanhood to you, if you had to describe it?

R7: Even stronger. Even stronger than you would need to be to be a black male. You have to be strong so strong. You have to be so strong, and you have to be smart. It's not even like book smart, you just have a level of intelligence that allows you to deal with everything. So also add patience, you have to have a level of patience I think a lot of people do not have. So you just pretty much strong, smart, and patient. Yeah.

Respondents also very strictly defined the ways in which Black women were allowed to be strong. Black women, in essence, are allowed to be strong, but not too strong to the point that it's overbearing, as stated by Respondent 2.

Interviewer: So in your opinion what does it mean to be a Black woman? Like what does it mean to you to be a Black woman?

R2: I think you definitely have to be strong. Um outspoken. Um you have to be proud because there's a lot of people that are gonna try to tear you down. You have to look past the stereotypes people place on you...and...

Interviewer: What type of stereotypes?

R2: Like loud, but not loud, but like ghetto, or outspoken sometimes. Like, voice your opinion too much, um, rude. Some might say ignorant or childish. And I think you have to just prove everybody wrong. Like you have to work extremely hard because there's so many people against you, even people of your same race.

While participants did make note of the stresses and strain that Black women were under and the strength they had to have in order to endure it, Black women were often erased when it came to discussing issues of racial inequality and police brutality. Both black female and male identified persons discussed a prioritization or even erasure of Black women's experiences with racial injustice. For example, male identified Respondent 6 discusses that manhood means being wary of society "being out to get" black men.

R6: Like verbally physically um I feel like um because um there's so many things that can um play upon a black man, like to bring him down, or stuff like that uhm that a black man should be strong just to take on society. That's just how I feel.

Interviewer: Okay. What does it to you mean to be a Black man?

R6: Um a lot of things. Mostly from what my mom tells me you know it's going to be tough cause you know the world is kind of out to get you just you know because of your skin color and you're a black male so....

Interviewer: Right. So like what do you mean by like the world is out to get you

R6: Like you know not everybody is on your side. Like um you have to be careful of who you make friends with. Who actually cares for you and you know who's going to have your back in like sticky situations.

In addition, Black female identified Respondent 4 completely erased, or rather thought that police brutality against Black women was non-existent and framed Black women merely as supporters to black men's right to live.

R4: Yeah so like the Black lives matter movement I feel like is very more about like um police and even though they're still talking about like, police they still did kill like African American women, it's mainly African American men that are

being profiled and stuff like that. And we don't just see African American men protesting, we see a large representation of African American women. And I feel like if society had pinned those two groups together there would be no collision and support on both sides.

Within these responses, and many others within the interviews, we see both an enhancement of Black women's strength in conjunction with an erasure of the often racialized and gendered issues that they face. While respondents were fully aware that Black women faced much adversity, the idea that such adversity stemmed from structural inequality such as misogynoir or Black male patriarchy was not realized at all. It was also extremely interesting to see that this theme emerged, although the researcher made no mention of Black women as strong.

5.1.2.2. THE MAMMY/CULTURAL PROTECTOR

Fasula et al's research on the sexual double standard addresses that men are often seen as the pursuer in sexual encounters and women are assumed to be passive. However, adding a racialized element addresses that even with that in mind, Black women are often left to assume active roles in terms of parenting and raising children. The salient idea of Black women as cultural protectors, mothers, and caretakers proved prominent within the interviews. For example, female identified Respondent 1 brought up the fact that traditionally and historically, Black women were been made to take care of children, and were therefore more nurturing than Black men.

Interviewer: Okay, that's fine. Do you feel as though Black men and Black women's gender roles are the same? Or different?

R1: I think that Black women are seen more as nurturing. I think that's something that they may not necessarily share, that quality.

Interviewer: So you don't see Black men as nurturing, like...

R1: Not if they are not nearly as much as Black women are portrayed to be

Interviewer: And why do you think that is?

R1: Um I think, this is just me, but I think that's it's because Black women were responsible for taking care of others people's children in the past so they've just grown to be nurturing and do it very well.

Regardless of the belief that Black women are innate nurturers, Black single mothers are heavily maligned within the Black community. Both Black male and female identified respondents acknowledge this phenomenon in their responses comparing single mothers to single fathers.

R4: Um I feel like um it's kind of hard I feel like pregnant women are more frowned upon than like after when they have the child. Because I feel like when they have the child it depends what they're doing and how they're still succeeding. So like I feel like all mothers when they pregnant are frowned up because like especially is she has-she's like-people say like why would have a child by someone that's not with you and stuff like that. So it's like single mom who have to raise like strong individuals. Their children, they're seen as like the most successful people in the country because they did it alone. But then at the same time if they raise children that are criminals and not like academically achieving then they are really frowned upon. So it really is like the outcome of the child almost which shapes them which is kind of like sad but it's every child.

The above excerpt is from a female identified respondent, but again Black male identified respondents often held the same beliefs, as exemplified from this response from Respondent 5.

R5: I feel like today people conceive it as rare for a black man to take care of his child. So I feel like then society is definitely going to accept him, because it doesn't really happen. Or they want you to believe it doesn't really happen.

Interviewer: Yeah Ok so what about black women? If a single black woman has a child, do you feel as though she, the mother, would be accepted by the Black community?

R5: I feel like when a single black woman has a child its irresponsible, and they feel like she did something wrong, she wasn't thinking straight, she's ruined the child's life because she's no going to be able to take care of it. Stuff like that.

Here we see respondents discuss the belief that Black women are thought to be inherently nurturing, but only as long as they subscribe to normative, patriarchal modes of motherhood. As stated previously, there were no questions within the interview schedule that related to the controlling image of the Mammy; respondents perceived that Black women are inherently nurturing on their own volition. These results speak to Black women's ability to hold agency over their sexual expression. If Black women are thought to be solely nurturing and motherly, their ability to be sexually expressive is constrained and their sexual agency is therefore inhibited.

5.1.2.3. THE JEZEBEL V. THE BLACK LADY

Throughout the interview process the presence of the controlling images of the Jezebel and the Black Lady were overwhelming. Out of all of the controlling images discussed above, these two were most commonly compared and contrasted by every respondent. Misogynoir, internalized misogynoir, and Black male patriarchy were extremely prevalent in responses that spoke to Black men and women's sexual agency. Quite frequently a comparison was made between the Black Lady image, which most respondents referred to as "queens," and the Jezebel image, which ranged from a variety of terms such as "hoe" and "bad bitch." Both male and female respondents participated in

policing Black women's sexual agency within varying portions of the interview process.

As stated in previous sections, respondents often were aware of the sexual double standard, but perpetuated it anyway, as exemplified in this response from male identified

Respondent 9:

Interviewer: Okay sure. Is there an impact on the way you view a Black woman if she has multiple sexual partners?

R9: Um sometimes I guess I just have to get to know them I guess. Like if it's someone that's like in college? In general, I know like in college like you do what you want to do so I don't really judge them based off of that but I guess the way you carry yourself? So like if it's a situation where like people are exposing you or whatever, that's childish like. If it's not that she's always out at a party like on somebody, I guess like people like that I guess do look down on them but like oh I guess she's a hoe, things like that so yeah.

In combination with Black male respondents openly maligning Black women's sexual expression, Black women respondents subscribed to self-policing of their own sexuality as represented by female identified Respondent 2:

R2: I don't think people are trying to gain respect anymore, they're just trying to get attention. Um from whoever they can get attention from, even if it's not good attention. So, yeah. I think that you had to uphold yourself to a certain way back then because you were so looked down upon but now I feel like Black women, not just Black women, women will just do whatever to get attention, to be able to say oh he looked at me, oh he messaged me, or he snapchatted me I don't think we have respect for ourselves, and I don't think anyone will respect you until you respect yourself. Like I would say like Nicki Minaj people will respect her like as an artist, but as a person no. Like she carries herself as like a big booty girl who just sings about sex and money pretty much. And I don't think that's a way you would want people to see you all the time.

Respondent 2's remarks reflected the idea that Black women, or women in general are simply out to get attention. In other words, women cannot express themselves in a sexual manner without being seen as attention seekers: everything women do is

centered around male consumption. Respondent 2 alludes to respecting yourself, or rather, respectability politics, as an appropriate way to govern oneself. She speaks of “upholding oneself” as a more admirable form of self-expression for Black women. In addition, she also makes allusions to Nicki Minaj, a current popularized rapper whose lyrics and aesthetic situates around women expressing themselves sexually, and maligns her as a “big booty girl” with no substance. These comments directly compare and contrast Black lady like women who are worthy of respect, and Black “big booty girls,” who are not. In addition to this response, comments concerning Black women’s sexuality were also used to justify negative treatment by men. For example,

R4: I feel like it is a man’s job to respect a woman, um I feel like at first all-if you meet a woman you’re supposed to respect them. But I feel like a man is not going to respect a woman if she doesn’t respect herself or she doesn’t portray a respectful, a person that needs respect. Um I don’t give respect unless I feel like it should be given. So why should a man? Especially when it’s like an image like Nicki Minaj doing this. If I’m a man I’m not gonna look at her and be like “oh I respect her” I’m gonna be like “no, I want to have sex with her.” Like it’s as simple as that.

Interviewer: So kind of like they sexually objectify themselves and so there’s no room for like respect.

R4: Definitely.

Respectability politics and the comparison of the Black Lady image to that of Jezebel can actually morph into more than just ideology, they can morph into rape culture. Women’s bodily appearance, according to Respondent 4, can solicit negative reactions from men. These negative reactions can range from catcalling, to physical abuse, to sexual assault. Blaming Black women for the violence inflicted upon them dismisses Black men’s sexism and misogynoir, and dismisses them from accountability for their actions.

Both Black men and Black women took part in contrasting the images of respectable Black women/queens with “hoes and bad bitches.” Each interview included negative views towards Black women who expressed their sexuality in ways that are considered deviant and/or traditionally masculine. While Black men are afforded the ability to express themselves sexually however they please because of the gendered nature of sexual expression, Black women are considered sexually lascivious for doing so. This double standard is reflective of traditional gender roles that are enforced both socially and culturally. Respondents either agreed *with* traditional gender roles regarding sexual expression, or agreed that they existed. Thus, Black women’s sexuality is heavily policed and confined within the Black community as represented in these interviews.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Much theoretical work has been done to discuss the negative experiences Black women face regarding their sexual experiences (Blair, 2014; Collins, 2000; Collins, 2005; Collins, 2015; hooks, 2004; Macias, 2015; Simms, 2001). Within this study, qualitative research methods were used to assess Black freshman collegiate student's beliefs concerning sexual double standards. Through discussing tenets of sexual double standards and Black identity, several themes arose which encompassed and supported the theoretical claims of Black feminist theory regarding misogynoir, Black male patriarchy, controlling images of Black womanhood, and respectability politics.

From the data collected, there is a strong presence of each theoretical premise mentioned above within the sample that was interviewed. Each respondent agreed with elements of sexual double standards, or attempted to control or define Black women's sexuality as negative if it did not fit the mold of maintaining socially accepted, normative, feminine performance. Both men and women identified persons believed that Black women's sexuality is controlled more strictly than Black men's, and many supported the idea as normative. Although I was specifically seeking to understand how Black women were victims of this vicious cycle of misogynoir and Black male patriarchy, women respondents had internalized those messages and self-policed themselves and other Black women accordingly. From this standpoint, I found support not only for Black male patriarchy and misogynoir perpetuated by Black men towards Black women, but support for internalized misogynoir perpetuated by Black women as well. These findings are very

nuanced, as both Black women and men understood that Black women were often negatively stereotyped in society but viewed utilizing differing forms of policing as counteracting, rather than reinforcing, those stereotypes.

CHAPTER 7: LIMITATIONS

As with all studies, this one has a few limitations. First, my identity as a Black woman impacted the openness of Black men during the interviews in comparison to Black women. Black men were hesitant to reveal their misogynoiristic and patriarchal beliefs, unlike Black women, who were willing to disclose their experiences and thoughts. Much scholarly debate has weighed the pros and cons of sharing a group identity with research participants (Wilkins, 2012). Some believe that outsider status may stifle a researcher's ability to ascertain the full truth. Although I began this research confident in my ability to utilize both racial and gender commonalities in order to make participants comfortable for full disclosure, I found that commonality is indeed intersectional (Johnson, 2013). My Blackness did not ensure full disclosure from individuals who held gender identities different from my own.

I also initially believed that the personal nature of the questioning had the potential to dissuade respondents from being open and descriptive. Again, I found this to be true mostly for male identified participants. Although prodding had to be used to get detailed responses, those who identified as female were very open and honest, while those who identified as male were hesitant to elaborate on their beliefs when they felt they were misogynoiristic.

The sample size and the population that I sampled also affected my results. Individuals surveyed were between 18-19 years of age and enrolled at a public university in the Southeastern portion of the United States. My results reflected these descriptors..

Respondents held very traditional southern values, and most identified as Christian. Therefore, their views may not be reflective of the larger population, but may perhaps be reflective of this generation. In addition, being that respondents were very young, their autonomous beliefs regarding sexuality outside of what they been taught by their families has probably not been developed.

The small sample size and sampling method will not lead to generalizations of my research findings, however the research is still important as it highlights the direct experiences and thoughts of Black women and can have implications for larger scale projects in the future. In addition, by sampling traditional aged college students my findings are limited towards upwardly mobile millennials. However, this research can have implications for future research with a broader sample. I hope to expand my research to include members of the Black community of all age groups, sexual identities, education level, and location.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Black women face the challenge of dealing with oppression from both racism and sexism in ways that combine to form misogynoir. Within this paper I have sought to encompass the theoretical perspectives of Black feminist scholars and sexual double standard researchers in order to provide a foundation for the research concerning the relationship patterns that reflect the Black community's perspective towards Black women's sexual expression.

I sought to work to understand the ways that Black women's sexuality is policed within the Black community. I found that themes of misogynoir, black male patriarchy, respectability politics, and controlling images of Black womanhood were prominent within my sample. This work reinforces the ideologies represented in the literature, but also points to the work that needs to be done in order to address internalized misogynoir that is perpetuated by Black women themselves. While the themes named above are having detrimental and life threatening effects on Black women's lives, research could stand to discuss the ways in which Black women internalize and perpetuate these ideologies. This is not to place the blame on Black women, or make it their responsibility to eradicate these ideologies, however the literature could discuss the directionality of having conversations surrounding internalized oppressions. In addition, more sociological research could work to create an intersectional analysis concerning sexual double standards and patriarchy. Expanding empirical work to include the theoretical premises of

Black feminism has the potential to drastically change the field and be more inclusive of Black femme identities.

Although many scholars in Black feminist thought have written about this subject, further sociological research can strengthen their research by observing and explaining misogynoir within the Black community through empirical methods. In addition, empirical sociological research could also work to implement the theoretical premises of Black feminist scholars in their work. This research is critical as it shed light on the various forms of oppression Black women experience and internalize. Black women are being harmed at alarming rates at the hands of misogynoir and Black male patriarchy through domestic violence and interpersonal violence, most of which is perpetuated intraracially (VPC, 2002) (McGuffey, 2013). As a highly vulnerable and understudied population, it is important that researchers and scholars be inclusive of the experiences of Black women. “If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all systems of oppression (The Combahee River Collective, 1977).

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview Questions are currently sorted based on themes. During the conduction of interviews, gender neutral questions will be asked first, following questions that pertain to the respondent's gender identity, and ending with questions concerning the respondent's opposite gender identity.

Identity Interview Protocol

- **Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening**
- Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.
- I am _____.
- Confirm the respondent's name. Tell them you won't use the name again in order to assure anonymity.
- I am interested in the factors that influence how minority student's gender role ideologies.

Verbal Consent Portion

“You have read the information presented in the consent form. You've had the chance to ask questions about this study, the study language, and what is expected of you as a participant. You certify that all of your questions have been answered to your full satisfaction. You are at least 18 years of age, and you agree to participate in this research project. You are aware that your verbal agreement to these statements indicates your informed consent. If at any time you are uncomfortable with any of the questions, you are under no obligation to answer. If at any time you feel as though you would like to withdraw your participation from the study, you allowed to do so.”

Appendix I: Interview Questions

Identity

1. Do you feel you are accepted, in general, by the Black community?
2. What does it mean to be a Black man?
3. What does it mean to be a Black woman?
4. Describe your religious beliefs, if you have any.
5. (If applicable), do you think your religious affect your sexual relationships?

Intraracial Gender Tension

6. Have you ever felt discriminated upon by members of the opposite sex in your race group?
7. If a single black man has a child, do you feel as though he, the father, would be accepted by the Black community?
8. If a single black woman has a child, do you feel as though she, the mother, would be accepted by the Black community?
9. What are the qualities of a respectable black woman?
10. What are the qualities of a respectable black man?

11. Is there an impact on the way you view a Black woman if she has multiple heterosexual partners?
12. Is there an impact on the way you view a Black man if he has multiple heterosexual partners?

Sexual Double Standards

Polarized Heterosexualities

13. What does it mean to be considered a hoe/whore?
14. What is a reasonable amount of sexual partners for men at your age?
15. What is a reasonable amount of sexual partners for women at your age?
16. Do you oppose or support casual hookup sex for Black men?
17. Do you oppose or support casual hookup sex for Black women?
18. What is an appropriate age for Black men to lose their virginity?
19. What is an appropriate age for Black women to lose their virginity?

Active Male/Passive Female Roles

20. Who is responsible for directing sexual interactions during intercourse?
21. Should Black women enjoy sex as much as Black men?
22. Do you feel as though Black men and Black women's gender roles are the same? Or different? Please explain.
23. Is there an impact on the way you would view a Black woman if she was sexually assertive?
24. Is there an impact on the way you would view a Black man if he was sexually assertive?
25. In your opinion, does sexual intercourse play a role in Black men's self-perceived masculinity?
26. Who is responsible for the possible, unintended outcomes of sexual intercourse (pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, etc.)

Power Struggle Narrative

27. Within a nuclear family structure (husband, wife, and kids), what roles should each spouse play in the relationship?
28. Do you feel as though Black men and Black women are pitted against one another? Why or why not?
29. In your opinion is there a gender difference concerning who is more likely to be targets of sexual coercion?

APPENDIX II: MEMES

What are your thoughts on this photo? Probing: Do you agree or disagree with its message? Explain.



What are your thoughts on this photo? Probing: Do you agree or disagree with its message? Explain.



What are your thoughts on this photo? Probing: Do you agree or disagree with its message? Explain.

