

NETFLIX

AND CHILL...

WITH THE SEXUALIZATION

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INTRODUCTION:

Netflix offers a wide variety of teenage films, many of which have gone viral. Teenagers all over the world are consuming this media. Therefore, what they watch has an effect on their developing minds and behaviors. Specifically, teenage girls tend to be overly sexualized and objectified in media leading to similar behaviors in everyday life. Prior research found a correlation between media exposure among young male adolescents and viewing themselves as more sexually dominant which in turn caused them sexually objectify girls (2018). Not only does media exposure encourage sexualization of others, it also causes young adults to self sexualize. Trekels (2017), found that overtime teenage girls who were exposed to television were more likely to self-sexualize and portray "sexy" behaviors. In addition, those exposed to this form of media were exposed to objectified dating scripts which led to girls adopting a dating script that objectified themselves (Rousseau, 2018). However, boys also are effected by the sexual objectification that occurs in media. One study found that those exposed to sexually objectified media experienced higher body surveillance. Overall, both boys and girls are effected by sexually objectified media (Aubrey,2006). However, teenage girls face more of the repercussions as they are often the target of sexualization and objectification. Not only does this lead to self-objectifying, it also causes objectified dating scripts, body image issues, and heightened body surveillance which all can lead to mental health struggles.

METHODS:

A total of 20 Netflix films were analyzed for examples of Gaze Theory in addition to examples of Goffmanian Analysis and Sex Role Theory. Films were chosen based on their genre, popularity, and production date; popular teenage films that were most recent were chosen. Qualitative notes were taken while watching each film.

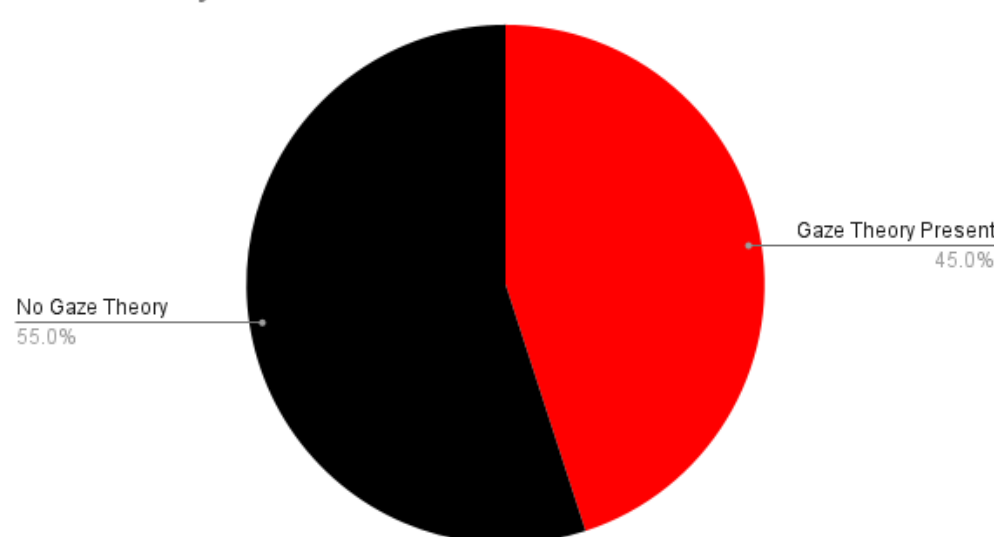
Films:

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| 1. To All the Boys I've Loved Before | 11. Moxie |
| 2. Dude | 12. American Pie Girls' Rules |
| 3. Candy Jar | 13. #RealityHigh |
| 4. The Kissing Booth | 14. The Prom |
| 5. The Edge of Seventeen | 15. He's All That |
| 6. The Half of It | 16. After |
| 7. Banana Split | 17. Dumplin' |
| 8. The Perfect Date | 18. Lady Bird |
| 9. Sierra Burgess is a Loser | 19. You Get Me |
| 10. Tall Girl | 20. The Last Summer |

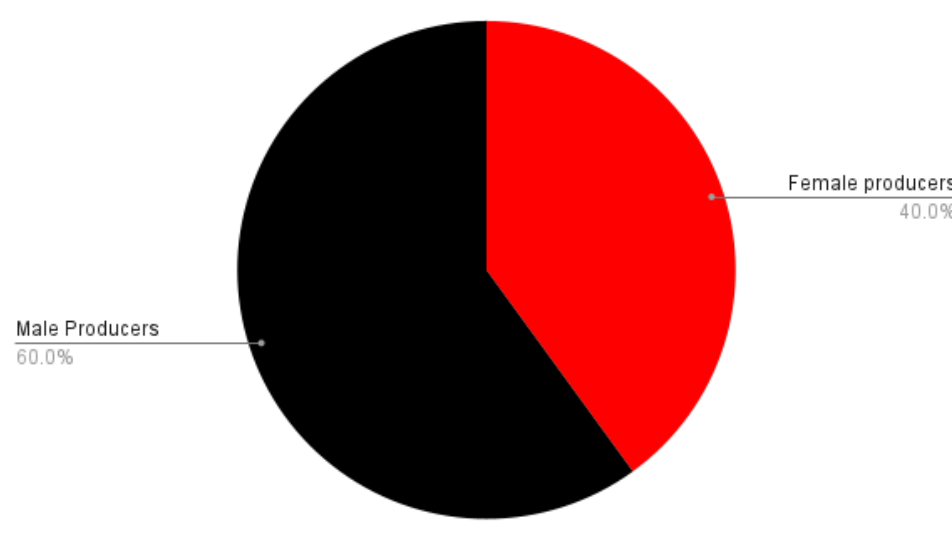
RESULTS:

Not all films portrayed examples of Gaze Theory. However, all films contained sexualization of female characters who were meant to play high school aged girls. Out of the 20 films, 9 displayed examples of true Gaze Theory. These films included: Dude, Kissing Booth, The Edge of Seventeen, Sierra Burgess is a Loser, Tall Girl, American Pie: Girls' Rules, He's All That, You Get Me, and The Last Summer. Out of the 20 films analyzed, 8 were produced by women while the majority, 12, were produced by men.

Gaze Theory

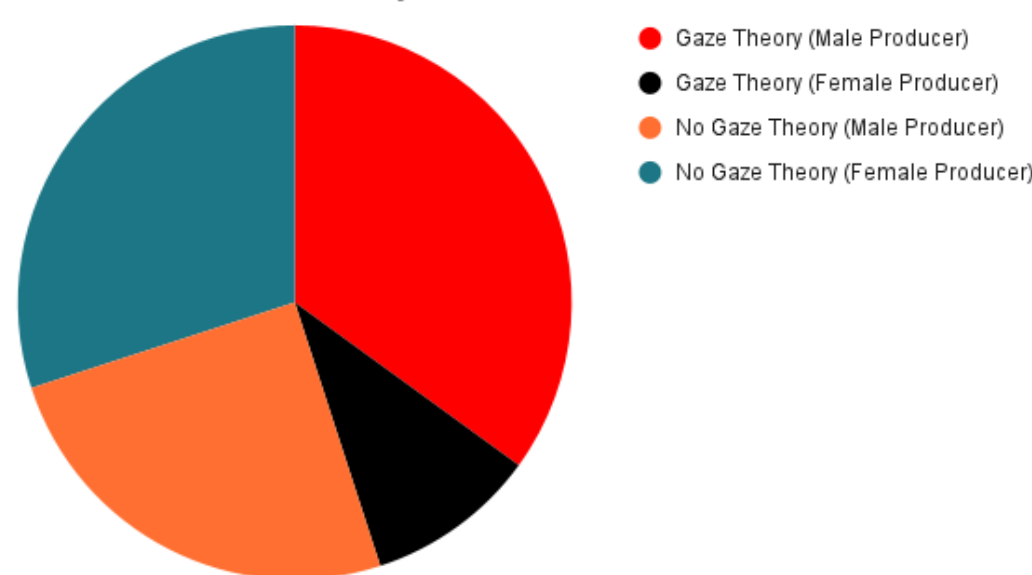


Gender of Film Producers



Despite analyzing for Goffmanian Analysis and Sex Role Theory, the correlation between male producers and Gaze Theory is more interesting. Out of the nine films that displayed Gaze Theory, 7 were produced by men. However, it should be noted that there were more male producers than female.

Gaze Theory and Gender of Producer



DISCUSSION:

Netflix is a very popular streaming device among today's teens and is a large portion of how they consume media. Previous research has shown that adolescents learn gender roles and dating scripts from media consumption; meaning that the messages sent through media are extremely important. When media depicts sexualization and objectification as normal, these become scripts for teenagers. Although these effect both boys and girls, teen girls experience the most ramifications. The results of overly sexualized and objectified media are self-sexualization, body image issues, higher body surveillance, and objectified dating scripts all of which can lead to mental health problems among teen girls. Boys face some similar effects but they also learn that sexualizing and objectifying girls is okay, and in fact, the norm. As boys learn these behaviors, it only reinforces the dangerous stereotypes into their everyday lives.

Data collected regarding media producers has historically shown that women are underrepresented. The results of this study further reinforce this data; only 8 out of the 20 films were produced by women. When observing which films displayed Gaze Theory, 9 out of 20 films had true examples of Gaze Theory. Out of these 9 movies, 7 were produced by men. This shows an obvious correlation between male producers and Gaze Theory. However, it must be noted that more male producers were observed than female. These results illustrate how gender representation is important in media; the messages being produced by male producers are much more dangerous for teenage girls. Despite two female producers utilizing Gaze Theory, overall the films made by women were more progressive and had more positive messages for teen girls.

In addition, to an unequal amount of male and female producers, this study is limited in the sense that the research was completed qualitatively and some examples may have been missed due to human error. The examples of Gaze Theory also do not include all of the instances of sexualization that occurred which is just as dangerous as objectification.

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