CONTENT ANALYSIS - THE SEXUALISATION OF GENDER IN MUSIC VIDEOS

by Christina Kalinic

Syllabus link:

Quantitative and qualitative research

Students will:

- examine at least TWO contemporary issues within society, using ONE appropriate research method drawn from:
    - content analysis

Syllabus outcome:

P8 plans and conducts ethical and social research

Learning intention:

Examine the portrayal of gender and sexualisation in music videos through content analysis

Success Criteria

By the end of this teaching and learning activity, students will be able to:

- Identify the purpose and process of content analysis.
- Collaboratively develop and apply a tally sheet to systematically record observations of gender portrayal and sexualisation in music videos.
- Demonstrate an understanding of ethical research practice.
- Analyse patterns and themes emerging from their data to draw informed conclusions about gender representation and media influence.
- Compare portrayals of gender in music videos to real-life social norms and experiences, recognising links to broader societal values and expectations.
- Critically evaluate how such media representations may shape audience attitudes and reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes.
- Contribute thoughtfully to a class discussion, using evidence from the content analysis to support their views on the impact of sexualisation in popular culture.

Introducing primary research early in the Year 11 Society and Culture classroom is a powerful way to build the skills students will need for their Year 12 *Personal Interest Project (PIP)*. Content analysis allows students to systematically explore how society and culture are represented in media.

Music videos are an ideal starting point. They are familiar, engaging, and full of examples of gender portrayal and sexualisation. By analysing music videos like *No Doubt's 'Just a Girl'* or *Beyoncé's 'Run the World'*, students can identify patterns, note differences in representation, and consider the impact these portrayals may have on audiences, particularly young people.

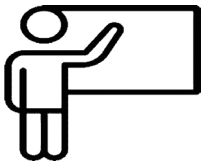
The key to success is collaborative scaffolding. Teachers guide students in co-constructing a tally sheet, demonstrating how to define categories, phrase neutral criteria, and record observations. This collaborative step acts as *assessment for learning*, providing immediate insight into students' understanding of research design and their ability to make informed, unbiased judgments.

Once students conduct the analysis independently, the results become *assessment of learning*. Teachers can evaluate students' ability to apply the method, analyse patterns, and draw meaningful conclusions about the influence of media on societal perceptions of gender. This process builds confidence in research skills and encourages reflective thinking about cultural norms and stereotypes.

Content Analysis - *The sexualisation of gender in music videos*

MUSIC VIDEOS:

- **No Doubt's *Just a Girl (1995)* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHzOOQfhPFg
- **Akon's *Smack That (2006) ft. Eminem* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKDdT_nyP54
- **Pink's *Stupid Girl (2006)* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BR4yQFZK9YM
- **Beyonce's *Single Ladies (2008)* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4m1EFMoRFvY
- **Beyonce's *Run the World (2011)* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBmMU_iwe6U
- **5 Seconds of Summer's *Good Girls (2014)* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FfG_5JBVBQ
- **Taylor Swift's *The Man (2019)* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqAJLh9wuZ0
- **Hailee Steinfeld's *Most Girls (2021)* at:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBB_QOZNEdc



JOINT CONSTRUCTION (shared pen):

Create a tally sheet to investigate how gender is sexualised in music videos.

HINT: *Refer to Elizabeth A McDade-Montez' (2011) coding table for ideas.*

DISCUSS AND RESPOND:

- *How do these portrayals in music videos compare to real-life experiences or societal norms?*
- *What impact might these representations have on viewers, particularly young audiences?*
- *How can individuals and society challenge or resist harmful gender stereotypes perpetuated in the media?*

Content Analysis - *The sexualisation of gender in music videos*

CODING SHEET EXAMPLE: Coding sheet for content analysis of sexualisation in the Media- *Elizabeth A McDade-Montez (2011)*

your name & date:	
Show: **Season:** **Episode:** **Coding Category Item**	# of times
Clothing (Code a single outfit only the first time it appears & code all aspects of an outfit)	
1. **Reveals/exposes** sexualized body part (chest, waist/pelvis, buttocks, upper legs, back. Includes high slit on skirt or dress, short skirt (midthigh or shorter), cleavage, etc.). Cleavage includes smaller chested women revealing ctr of chest.	
2. **Emphasizes** sexualized body part by being tight, displaying nearly no wrinkles or looseness against body, clearly outline body parts of sexualized areas (chest, waist/pelvis, butt, upper legs)	
3. Made of lingerie-like material or corset/underwear appearance	
4. Features animal print	
5. Underwear/Bathing suit	
6. High heel/platform shoes	
7. Fishnet tights or FABRIC	
8. Writing with sexual content (flirt, hottie, etc.)	
9. Adult woman dressed sexily in child's clothing (NOT pigtails).	
Body Exposure	
10. Partial Nudity. Includes views of buttocks and unintential views of body, rather than clothes that are revealing. Do not code bathing suits here but rather under 5.	
11. Full Nudity	
12. Implied Full Nudity (e.g., standing behind shower curtain)	
Bodily/Physical Behaviors	
13. Sexually alluring behaviors: licking lips, stroking body, pelvic thrusts, hip shaking, butt shaking (displays of sexual readiness). Physical forms of flirting such as twirling hair, crouching, bending, moving in a way to attract attn to body. Swooning (as though,a woman will faint over the man).	
14. Seductive dancing.	
15. Animal-type behaviors (crawling, growling, purring)	
16. **Acting as though a trophy**, prize, or decorative object. Needs to be explicit rather than a person in the backgroud who is not talking and is part of a larger	
Body/Appearance Modification. Note: Many of these would have to be discussed or otherwise made obvious to the viewer to be coded. Related to the specific thin beauty ideal.	
17. Plastic Surgery	
18. Tanning	
19. Fake nails/manicure/pedicure/nailpolish	
20. Cologne	
21. Hair extensions	
22.Fake eyelashes	
23.Fake teeth/whitening/modifications to teeth	
24.Hair removal	
25.Hair dying/styling/cutting or unnatural color (Code 1x per episode. Do not code obvious costumes for Halloween, etc.)	
26. Spa treatments	
27.Breath spray/breath mint	
28.Heavy make-up on young girl/preteen. (must be OBVIOUS).	
29.Lying about age	

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30.**Body/appearance monitoring** (checking on self in mirror, adjusting clothes, hair, makeup, etc.; asking others how you look, updating profile picture, distress over not looking good)	
31.**Weight monitoring,** excessive exercise, dieting/not eating when others are eating, disordered eating (binging/starving/laxative use)	
32.Tattoos	
33.Padded bras	
34.Mole removal	
35.Sweat control	
Work/Hobby-related behaviors (Code each person engaging in behavior)	
36.Participation in beauty pageant	
37.Participation in other beauty contests(homecoming, prom)	
38.Modeling	
39. Exotic dancing/stripping/prostitution/other sex work	
40.Other performance-related occupation OR BEHAVIOR where appearance is emphasized (e.g., singer, cheerleader, beauty product salesperson, background	
Objectifying Behaviors	
41.Move, reposition, grab, place things on, throw, or otherwise physically **treat character as a physical object** rather than person - usually in the context of violence/aggression/bullying. Not necessarily sexual forms of objectification. But do NOT include all forms of violence such as hitting, kicking, slapping, etc.	
42.**Refer to other person as trophy**/prize/ decorative or other object or animal. Comments that **reference person by single attribute** rather than a name or more meaningful reference (e.g., the bleach blonde waitress, the redhead, my 10 o'clock [date], not knowing the person's name when the character clearly should know the name. A more specific form of sexism/objectification. In the context of	
43.**Manipulating/tricking** or attempting to manipulate/trick a person into a romantic relationship (e.g., lying about common interests to get a date)	
Physically Sexualizing behaviors	
44. **Leering**, ogling, staring, raising eyebrows suggestively. Jaw dropping open. "Checking out" someone.	
45.**Catcalling**, whistling, other verbal comments such as "yum" or "nice"	
46.Unwanted **sexual touching**, kissing, hugging, caressing, or fondling, pinching, brushing up against in sexual way toward person or representation of a person such as photo or doll.	
47.Unwanted **sexual gesturing** (e.g. licking one's lips or grinding hips in a suggestive manner toward another person or toward a representation of that	
Sexualizing statements about body/weight/appearance/age	
48.comments about **weight**/weight loss/fatness/thinness/eating/dieting	
49. comments about **puberty** development	
50. comments about particular **body parts**	
51. comments about **age,** appearing young, being young, the importance of looking	
52. comments about hotness, **attractiveness,** beauty, or evaluative comments about appearance (NOT cuteness)	
53. Statements encouraging girls to **dress up sexy** (see above, Body/Appearance Modification, for examples).	
Sexualizing statements about physical attraction, relationships, selecting or pursuing a partner, and being single	
54. Statements or actions whereby **men value**, select, or pursue women based on their physical appearance.	
55. Statements whereby **women value other women** based on appearances. Or demand to be called pretty by others. For example, popularity decided based on attractiveness or lost based on unattractiveness or change in attractiveness.	