

**Study Design: A Media Literacy Lens on the Cultivation Effects of Rape Culture
Representation in Fantasy Media**

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Introduction

As media consumption continues to rise and the media landscape continues to grow in its complexity, exposure to dangerous integrated elements: toxic masculinity, rape myth, rape myth acceptance, sexual violence and rape culture, have dramatically increased the probability of negative cultivation effects for viewers. For example, Aubrey's (2011) study that thoroughly researched consumers' exposure to aggressive sexual media explores the consequential cultivation effects in sexual behavior and perception. While conducting this study, I found that there is a significant amount of research that explores cultivation effects of rape culture representation, specifically in the genre of fantasy media. What the guiding research does not address however, and what I researched through my experiment is how the lack of rape culture media literacy among viewers encourages these problematic, toxic narratives to continue in fantasy media because viewers are still actively consuming it. With that I aimed to answer the following in the conduction of the study, *How can a greater rape culture media literacy among viewers facilitate a change in narrative in fantasy media?*

Literature Review

Studies have analyzed, researched and demonstrated how TV shows, films and other forms of media cultivate behavioral effects adhering to sexual violence and acceptance of rape myth. Aubrey's study was focused between-subjects post-test-only experiment with two conditions: exposure to music videos of female artists that are high in sexual objectification (n D 44) and low in sexual objectification (n D 41) (Aubrey, J, Hopper, K., and Mbure, 2011, p. 366). Through her experiment, Aubrey investigates and proves that media representation of objectifying gender stereotypes and misogynistic attitudes about sex establish cultivation effects

including: violence against women, attitudes about interpersonal violence in sexual relationships, acceptance of rape myth, and a disbelief in the legitimacy of sexual harassment (2011, p. 366). Essentially viewers who are exposed to sexually aggressive content are much more likely to be accepting of rape myth and sexual violence. More specifically, viewers are more likely to see violence against women as “justified” when they are exposed to content that sexually objectifies women-- enter in the famous rape myth line, “she was asking for it.” Aubrey’s research also tested the idea that the activation of adversarial sexual beliefs are related to other more specific attitudes related to women deserving harm that might come to them (whether it be interpersonal violence, rape, or harassment) (2011, p. 366).

Ferreday’s research on rape culture representation in popular television series, *Game of Thrones*, claims that “the stories we tell ‘about’ rape, in other words, are slippery: they tell us a great deal about society’s attitude to gender, sexuality, violence, property and family relationships” (2015, p. 23). Ferreday’s study investigates how sexually aggressive media cultivates rape culture encouraging effects on viewers individually and as a cohesive societal group. Through the examination of the scene where Jaime Lannister rapes his sister Cersei, who he is in an incestuous relationship, Ferreday demonstrates GOT’s director Grave’s problematic rape myth portrayal of a “non-consensual sexual act becoming consensual as it echoes the language often used to trivialize rape in contemporary society: ‘boys will be boys.’” (2015, p. 30).

Myth of the separation between reality and fantasy

One of the largest variables of rape culture representation in percolating fantasy media is the conflict between real and unreal content. Ferreday cites in her research specific reactions from

GOT fans, “I don’t know about you, but I’ve found that happens sometimes in long-term relationships, ya know? I mean, not what happened in the show, just times where one person is ready and the other’s not AT FIRST and it ends up being okay” (2015, p. 32). Ferreday found other disturbing fan comments just like this one, all representative of the common theme, nonconsensual sex “must be negotiated, explained and defended in order not to disappoint or anger a male partner” (2015, p. 32). According to Ferreday’s findings, fan’s acceptance of this rape myth, that nonconsensual sex can be coerced to consensual and that’s “okay”, is a direct result of fantasy media presenting this conflict between what’s real and what’s unreal regarding rape. Viewers consequently rationalize sexually violent behavior, engage in rape myth acceptance and are unable to clearly define sexual consent because they can’t distinguish the difference between fantasy media and the reality of rape culture. If viewers are unable to make this distinction, exposure to this kind of fantasy media is more likely to cultivate effects in how they define rape/ sexual violence, rape myth and consent in their individual lives.

Just like GOT fans, many viewers believe that they understand the definition of rape and it’s correlating terms, consent and rape myth, when there is a significant amount of evidence that suggests otherwise. According to Hills, P., Pleva, M., Seib, E. & Cole, T. research, survivors are less likely to label their experience as rape if it does not fit the stereotypical scenario (Hills, 2020). As a result, victims often rationalize their experience.

Consent

Legally, sexual consent is defined as, “the person agrees to participate by choice, with the freedom and capacity to choose” (Hills, 2020); however, according to Hills research, consent should be considered a process as the initial plan can change and develop. Hill’s research

explains that the best way to break down and define consent is understanding the distinctive difference between “consent” and “wantedness.” And that, “sexual acts can therefore fall into one of four categories: wanted and consensual; unwanted and consensual; wanted and non-consensual (rape); unwanted and non-consensual (rape),” (Hills, 2020). According to Hills experiment, participants rated only 65% of non-consensual scenarios as rape (Hills, 2020). How participants define consent is crucial to their attitudes and understanding of rape culture; furthermore, their media literacy of rape culture representation.

Rape culture

Rape culture is the internalization of gender specific sexual scripts that both men and women consider the “norm.” (Hills, 2020). The common male perspective being that women are seen as objects of sexual desire that a man actively seeks out, typically without verbal communication. Ferreday explains rape culture as, “the need to understand rape as culture; as a complex social phenomenon that is not limited to discrete criminal acts perpetrated by a few violent individuals but is the product of gendered, raced and classed social relations that are central to patriarchal and heterosexist culture” (2015, p. 22). The importance of a participants understanding of rape culture lies in how they define their own sexual scripts.

Definitions of rape myth and rape myth acceptance

In the simplest of terms, rape myth is the rationalizations of rape that discredits a sexual act as violent. Rape myth acceptance is a common acceptance of these myths which often lead to victim blaming. Aubrey’s research shows that adversarial sexual beliefs were “consistently linked to acceptance of interpersonal violence and rape myth acceptance” (2011, p. 366). This

study attempted to examine how participants define rape myth and how rape myth acceptance is facilitated to them through the fantasy media they consume.

Audience perception/ reaction (Cultivation effects)

Arguably the most important variable of this study and the common thread all of the variables share-- cultivation effects. How the audience perceives reality based on the content they are exposed to ((Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M. & Signorielli, N. 1969)). The participants in this study were examined for cultivation effects specifically related to exposure to fantasy media.

Theoretical Background

Through a media literacy and cultivation effects lens, this study examined themes of rape culture representation in fantasy media that contributed to college students adversarial sexual beliefs, acceptance of interpersonal violence, rape myth acceptance and sexual harassment attitudes. George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory was used to examine how exposure to television/ media cultivates viewers' perception of reality (Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M. & Signorielli, N. 1969). The Media Literacy Theory was used to examine how media literacy education, instrumentalizes in minimizes potential negative effects on audiences, who are exposed to unrealistic media content and that can consequently have an impact on self-perceptions, beliefs and behavior (Bergstrom, A., Flynn, M. & Craig, C., 2018). Previous research primarily focused on how consumer cultivation effects connected to media literacy. Media literacy requires a balance between media consumption/ exposure and educational understanding of the media one consumes. Bergstrom (2018) claims media literacy as an essential skill to "successfully navigate today's culture"(p. 113-114). To do so while navigating the ever changing complexities of the media landscape can be quite challenging for most

students, as Bergstrom explains, faculty have noticed a lack of media literacy/ limitation of students' media literacy skill set. Therefore, the potential negative effects of media exposure are even greater.

Bryant and Zillmann, editor of Gerbner's cultivation theory (1969) perspective on media effects, supports this challenge in the evolution and the complex media landscape. They explain that essentially the more the media landscape develops and the more consumption habits are integrated into viewers everyday life, the greater the ability for viewers to experience cultivation effects (i.e behavior and perception of reality).

Methodology

Based off of previous research on cultivation effects of rape culture, the data was collected through one on one interviews with five participants. Prior to the interview I asked my participants to complete a diary log homework assignment, where each participant watched 2 media clips and answered 3 reflection questions. I also asked my participants to sign a consent form which included a trigger warning due to the sensitive content that was analyzed (see Appendix B). The two video clips that the participants watched were from the fantasy television shows, *Game of Thrones* and *The Vampire Diaries*. One video clip represents egregious sexual media and one represents more moderate sexual media. *Game of Thrones* season 1 episode 2 scene where Dany is forced to have sex with her husband, who she was forced to marry, Drogo, represented the egregious sexual media clip. *Vampire Diaries* season 1 episode 10 where main characters, Stefan and Elena have sex for the first time in their relationship, represented the more moderate sexual media. I asked the following reflection questions: *What are you taking away*

from this scene? How does this scene make you feel? How do you think this scene impacts audiences?

Both the one on one interview plus the pre-interview diary log homework assignment provided me with the depth that I was aiming for in my quantitative data collection. The one-on-one interviews established a greater level of comfort and encouraged each participant to be as honest as they can be. The pre-interview diary log homework assignment helped prepare the participants and got them thinking about the topic before the interview. During the zoom interview, I asked participants a series of 8 questions relating to the participants past and present media consumption habits with sexually aggressive content representative of rape culture, how they believe their media consumption has impacted their understanding of sexual consent, beliefs and harassment and various questions related to the concept of cultivation effects of acceptance of rape myth and interpersonal violence (see Appendix C).

I recruited participants from Her Campus Emmanuel, my Senior Seminar course and my other courses Health Communications and Public Relations. The participants were all current college students at Emmanuel, ages ranging from 19-22 years. Of all 5 participants, three of the participants were female and two were male. Most of the participants considered themselves to be media literate. Media literacy for the purpose of this study includes those who can separate themselves and their personal beliefs and behavior from the fantasy media they are consuming. The socioeconomic and occupational status of each individual participant is unknown (see Appendix A).

Data Analysis

All interview sessions were thoroughly documented through notes and audio recordings. Each interview session was conducted one on one through zoom and ranged between 25 to 40 minutes. Interview sessions were conversational to allow participants to speak openly and honestly. Post interview sessions, the content of the interviews was transcribed and coded (open, axial, selective) in an Excel spreadsheet. Starting with the open codes, where I broke down and summarized each of the participants' answers. The initial data of open coding resulted in over 120 different overlapping idea units.

After open coding, I proceeded with axial coding where I broke down the idea units into ten common thread themes that were present in the participants' answers. I then separated the axial codes into three different categories: sexually aggressive media themes, adversarial sexual beliefs and representation of sexual violence and rape myth acceptance, that are discussed in more detail below.

Results

Sexually Aggressive Media Themes

Sexually aggressive media themes is the first category where axial codes were categorized. Four of the ten axial codes were categorized here: rape culture, real vs. unreal, toxic masculinity, sexual objectification. Out of the four axial codes within the sexually aggressive media theme category, the most prominent were toxic masculinity/ male dominance and real vs. unreal. These two axial codes are discussed further below.

Toxic masculinity/ male dominance. The most commonly reported sexually aggressive media theme among the participants was toxic masculinity/ male dominance. When asked to describe Dogo's character from the Game of Thrones clip they watched prior to the interview, most

participants categorized him as an example of toxic masculinity and male dominance. For example, participant A stated:

We associate sexual aggressiveness with masculinity and barbarian warrior chiefs are typically considered masculine. So that was basically all I had in my head about Drogo.

Most participants also noted that Dogo's character was very confusing and they were not sure what to make of him. Participants explained that the dynamics changed throughout the scene which was confusing. Dogo was initially very aggressive with Danny and then by the end they were cuddling in bed together and sharing romantic intimacy. For example, participant C stated:

I didn't know what the situation was, but I didn't believe that they liked each other. And then they were like, kind of cuddling after. And I was like, not believing it cause all I've seen of him as being kind of aggressive with her. So, um, yeah, I think I had like trouble with that, like with believing their intimacy almost.

Real vs. Unreal. The other common reported sexually aggressive media theme among the participants was real versus unreal. When asked to describe their takeaways from the Game of Thrones clip, most participants noted the difference between real and unreal representations of sex and physical intimacy. For example, participant C stated:

I think that it can give an idea to viewers of like, this is how intimacy looks. I don't like the way that he was obviously pushing her and turning her around like so aggressively. I think that can give people the impression like this is like, 'Oh, he controls what he wants to do'.

Adversarial Sexual Beliefs

Adversarial Sexual Beliefs is the second category where axial codes were categorized. Similar to Aubrey's study, adversarial sexual beliefs are related to viewers specific attitudes about sex. This

category specifically focuses on two of the ten axial codes: personal sexual beliefs and consent. These two axial codes are discussed further below.

Personal Sexual Beliefs. Most of the participants noted their own personal sexual beliefs and their dislike for the messages the media clips they watched, sent to young viewers. For example, participant B stated:

I don't like the message this scene's like this (Stephan and Elena) sends, to teen audiences, that you can convince someone to love you and have sex. I also think scene's like this sends teens the message that relationships are supposed to be this toxic and dramatic. I'm of belief that you should rethink it. And if you're really that on the fence, then it should be a no. It's sort of a toxic situation and that sexual encounter shouldn't be like that they should be healthy.

Consent. When asked to define consent, participants noted their own understanding and personal belief, most of which all emphasized the element of verbal communication. The media literacy/ability for participants to clearly and accurately define sexual consent were reported high. Participants also noted their ability to distinguish the problematic representation or lack thereof consent in fantasy media. For example, participant C stated:

I think that if it's not like a verbal "yes, I want to", which I think it usually should be, then there's other verbal communication that you can give such as a partner asking you "is this okay? Is this what you want? Like, can I take this off?" Consent should be a step by step process, where your partner is consistently making sure that you are okay.

Representation of Sexual Violence & Rape Myth Acceptance

Representation of sexual violence and rape myth acceptance is the third category where axial codes were categorized. This category specifically focuses on five of the ten axial codes:

normalization/ romanticization, rape myth, sexual violence, sexual objectification and viewer engagement/ comfort/ discomfort. Out of the five axial codes within the representation of sexual violence and rape myth acceptance category, the most prominent were normalization/ romanticization, sexual violence and sexual objectification. These three axial codes are discussed further below.

Normalization/ Romanticization. The most commonly reported representation of sexual violence and rape myth acceptance among the participants was normalization and or romanticization. Similar to Ferreday's study, the media stories told about sex from the two media clips the participants each watched, participants reported normalization and romanticization to as problematic and rape culture encouraging. For example, participant A stated:

Sexual consent is two partners who know what they want. Who've communicated clearly what it is they want and who have come to a mutual agreement in real life. And this is signified by the word, "yes". Of course, television books, et cetera, tend not to use that because the word, 'yes' isn't sexy apparently.

Another notable factor, that although none of the participants were able to define rape myth/ rape myth acceptance when asked directly, they were able to define rape myth and rape myth acceptance when asked about the presence of aggressive sexual content in fantasy media and whether or not they think it's problematic. For example, participant B stated:

Yes, I think it's very normalized in fantasy media. Though I have never watched Game of Thrones, from what the example you showed to me, it was very graphic. I believe that in the media, when something bad happens to a character in consequence of bad behavior, you view that character as bad. In the scene with Dogo and Danny, their relationship is romanticized, when it

started out with rape. I looked at the comments and people kept talking about how it was such a great scene and failed to see how it was problematic

Sexual Violence. Another common reported representation of sexual violence and rape myth acceptance among the participants was axial code, sexual violence. Similar to Ferreday's study, the stories fantasy TV shows Game of Thrones and Vampire Diaries tell about sex, perpetuate and encourage societal attitudes about sexual violence. When asked to define sexual violence, most participants associated sexual violence with the phrasings: manipulation, not considerate of the others feelings, violent, harm, control, etc. For example, participant A states:

Using sexuality against someone to control them and establish dominance/ power over someone; letting that person know that you are in control and they are not.

Another important note, most participants associated sexual violence with the concept of fluid sexuality-- that sexual violence is more than just rape, its harassment or abuse of any kind. For Example participant C states:

Sexual violence doesn't consider the other persons feelings or comfort. It's using their body for your own selfish pleasure with no consideration for the other person's comfort. Sexual violence does not have to just be associated with rape, I think it's even someone touching you in a way that you don't want to be touched. Touching in a way that benefits the perpetrators own sexual desires without considering how it makes the other person feel.

Sexual Objectification. Another common reported representation of sexual violence and rape myth acceptance among the participants was axial code, sexual objectification. Most participants noted that sexual objectification is directly related to sexual violence and rape culture as it

perpetuates the idea that a man is completely dominant and the female is submissive. For example, participant C stated:

Game of Thrones, favors the ideal of a man being in charge and a woman being submissive to him.

Adversarial Sexual Beliefs & Media Consumption Habits Themes

After examining the axial codes, 6 key themes (selective codes) were discovered: verbal communication is key consent, recognized romanticization/ normalization, aggression and violence associated with masculinity, avoidance, continued consumption and voice of the consumer. The six selective codes were separated in two theme categories: adversarial sexual beliefs and media consumption habits. These themes are discussed further below.

Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Themes

Selective codes: verbal communication is key consent, recognized romanticization/ normalization, aggression and violence associated with masculinity are categorized here. As discussed and analyzed earlier in this study, adversarial sexual belief themes refers to two things: objectifying gender stereotypes and misogynistic attitudes about sex and media representation. Overall, participants recognized and expressed their personal beliefs about consent, sexual violence, objectifying gender stereotypes and misogynistic attitudes represented in fantasy media.

Verbal communication is key consent. The first of the selective codes, participants claimed to confidently understand what sexual consent is and looks like. Participants commonly reported they felt that verbal communication is crucial in the process of receiving sexual consent.

Additionally, they also felt media representation played a large role in viewers' sexual attitudes and behaviors.

Recognized romanticization/ normalization. Second, participants claimed to confidently understand what healthy and consensual relationships should look like. As discussed above, participants felt that media representation plays a crucial role in media consumers lives related to sexual attitudes and behaviors. Participants claimed that the fantasy media they consumed inaccurately portrayed romantic and sexual intimacy which consequently leads to encouragement of toxic relationships, sexual violence and rape myth acceptance.

Aggression and violence associated with masculinity. Third, participants felt the male characters lack of punishment and exceeding dominance in the sexual scenes they watched was an example of toxic masculinity. Participants, in their conclusions, associated this toxic masculinity with sexual aggression and violence. Participants also noted they were consequently extremely discomforted watching the media clips.

Media Consumption Habits Themes

The second thematic category among the selective codes is the media consumption themes which represents participants' media consumption/ their participation and their active voice in the media consumption process. Selective codes: avoidance, continued consumption and voice of the consumer are categorized here.

Avoidance. Participants overall considered their viewership habits to be in their control. For the few who practiced avoidance, they expressed they felt too grossed out and discomforted by the sexually aggressive content to continue watching. Participants also noted the environment with which their viewership took place was important. They felt comforted by their ability to control

their surroundings (i.e. pause the show or movie if it becomes too hard). They also explained how trigger warnings were key to their decision of media avoidance.

Continued Consumption. The participants who expressed they would continue consumption after being exposed to sexually aggressive media, felt they had enough media literacy to separate themselves from the media messages.

Voice of the Consumer. Lastly, participants overall expressed they felt that media consumers do have some power to influence future media narratives, after they encounter something problematic.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that college students who either choose to avoid or continue watching sexually aggressive fantasy media, have the media literacy skills to recognize toxic/ harmful media when they come across it. Consistent with Ferreday's (2015) findings, participants displayed an understanding of the weight that the media stories about rape holds. Additionally, the participants responses are encouraging of Ferreday's findings that feminist responses are a huge part of the representation of rape culture narrative.

As discussed earlier, the importance of a participants understanding of rape culture partially lies in how they define their own sexual scripts. The results of this study showed that participants had confidence in their own sexual scripts and consequently a good understanding of rape culture representation. Participants displayed knowledge of consent and sexual violence and a difference between the two. They also felt very strongly about how sexual intimacy portrayed in the media and compared the problematic elements of it to their own sexual beliefs. Participants overall, felt that their personal sexual scripts/ beliefs were healthy and representative of consent.

Consequently, the participants were confidently able to point out the inaccurate, aggressive and problematic elements of rape culture representation in fantasy media.

Participants also displayed a strong understanding of rape myth and rape myth acceptance, even though when asked directly they could not answer. They showed their understanding both through their reaction to the media clips they were shown and through their answers to other questions during the interview regarding consent, sexual violence and representation of sexually aggressive media/ rape culture. Participants felt very strongly that consent requires not only clear verbal communication, but consistent clear communication-- that consent is a consistent process. They also felt very strongly that representation of sexual violence and aggression is not and should not be limited to rape, that unwanted touching of any kind should be considered sexual violence.

Finally, one of the most important findings from the results were as follows. Most participants felt that Dogo's character going unpunished is dangerously encouraging of rape myth acceptance, as viewers are encouraged to completely glaze over his wrongful and violent actions. Participants also felt that Dogo and Danny's romanticized relationship dynamic normalizes rape and rape culture. They expressed that Dogo's character is representative of toxic masculinity that perpetuates rape, rape culture and the idealism surrounding male dominance and violence against women.

Overall, participants displayed a media literate understanding of the important elements that contribute to perpetuated sexual violence, rape, rape culture and rape myth acceptance.

Limitations and Future Implications

Although the fantasy media genre was the most important, it still brought limitations to this study in that not all participants were regular consumers of the adult fantasy media. The fantasy media genre was a little too broad. Some participants were more associated as regular consumers of fantasy media of family/ PG/ PG-13 fantasy media (i.e Disney, Marvel, etc.), media that does not contain a lot or any sexual content. Other limitations of this study include, lack of inclusivity regarding age and gender. Three out of the five participants were seniors in college and either 21 or 22 years old. This study did not take into account that seniors in college/ upperclassmen could be more media literate given their higher education compared to underclassmen. Theoretically, a freshman or sophomore may not have enough education in media literacy and as a result may have a harder time separating themselves from the media messages they receive. Additionally, three out of the five participants were female. In future studies, ideally the female to male ratio would be even.

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Appendix A

Recruitment

Dear [Recipient],

My name is Elise Kline and I am a senior at Emmanuel majoring in Communications and Media Studies. As part of my senior seminar course, I am conducting a research study to understand the cultivation effects of rape culture representation in fantasy media.

Participation in the study will take approximately 60 minutes. If you would like to participate, I will ask that you:

1. Complete a brief diary log assignment prior to the interview, which entails watching 2 media clips and answering 3 reflection questions (*20 minutes*).
2. Zoom interview answering 15 questions (*40 minutes*).

****Trigger warning: This study addresses rape, rape culture, sexual consent and sexual violence. Participation in this study will include discussion and a pre-interview homework assignment that addresses this topic.** Participation is also voluntary and there are no consequences for choosing not to participate or withdrawing from the study. This study will respect the confidentiality of all participants.

Any additional questions regarding this study can be directed to me at 508-944-9994 or klinee@emmanuel.edu. Please email me if you are interested in participating in this study.

Respectfully,

Elise Kline

Appendix B

Interview Consent Form

****Trigger warning: This study addresses rape, rape culture, sexual consent and sexual violence****

You have been invited to participate in an interview program under the direction of Elise Kline, Senior in Communications and Media Studies. The purpose of this interview is to address the cultivation effects of rape culture representation in fantasy media. Ms. Kline will be asking you a series of 15 questions regarding sexual consent, adversarial sexual beliefs, acceptance of interpersonal violence, rape myth acceptance, sexual harassment attitudes. The information learned in this interview will be used to demonstrate the danger of rape culture representation in fantasy media to not only educate viewers but content producers in the media literacy they need.

Procedure

As part of this study, you will be interviewed under the direction of Ms. Kline. Prior to the interview you will be sent a diary log assignment which will entail 2 media clips along with 3 short reflection questions that you will need to have completed before the interview.

Ms. Kline will ask you several questions while facilitating the discussion. As approved through the Senior Seminar Course Instructor, Dr. Mark Flynn, this interview will be recorded. However, your responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in the final report.

You can choose whether or not to participate in the interview, and you may stop at any time during the course of the study.

Please note that there are no right or wrong answers to interview questions. Ms. Kline wants to hear your viewpoints and would like for you to contribute your thoughts. Feel free to be honest and please let Ms. Kline know if at any point you are feeling triggered during the interview procedure.

Benefits and Risks

Your participation may benefit you and others affected by rape culture representation in fantasy media. Potential improvements include participants increased education and media literacy on rape culture and rape myth acceptance. However, please consider the trigger risks as this study addresses rape, rape culture, sexual consent and sexual violence.

Confidentiality

Ms. Kline will analyze the data, but—as stated above—your responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in any reports.

Contact

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact Elise Kline at klinee@emmanuel.edu or Dr. Flynn at flynnm@emmanuel.edu.

I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above.

Sign name:

Date:

Print name:

Senior Seminar Research Study, Emmanuel College

Appendix C

Research Questions

1. After watching the Game of Thrones media clip or if you have previously seen this show, what are your thoughts on the character Dogo? Is he a villain?
 - a. What kind of message do you think this scene sends?
2. What are your thoughts on Stefan and Elena? Does their sexual encounter demonstrate consent? What kind of message do you think this scene sends?
3. In your own words, define what is sexual consent?
4. How would you define what consensual sex is? How would you compare it to sexual violence?
5. Do you think aggressive sexual content is present in fantasy media? If so, do you think it's problematic? Why or why not?
6. Why do you think it's important for viewers to understand rape culture representation?
7. Do you think viewers as a whole have the power to influence media narratives?
8. When you come across sexual content in fantasy such as these examples, what is your response? Do you stop consuming it altogether? Or do you continue watching it?