

Gender-Typed Romantic & Sexual Scripts: A Content Analysis of Disney Princess Movies

Background - Present Study

- Children internalize gendered messages portrayed by Disney princess characters (Dinella, Pierce-Claps, & Lewandowski, 2017).
- These characters may influence how children view certain types of relationships (Ward & Harrison, 2005).
- It is important to understand how sexual and romantic scripts may influence children's expectations and behaviors in adult relationships (Ward, 1995).
- Study goals: 1) To create a standardized content analysis procedure for assessing romantic and sexual scripts for men and women in children's media & 2) analyze *Mulan* for messages in princess movies.

Methods

- The 375 interactions (Ward 1995) were coded for 39 different romantic and sexual scripts (categorized into 7 types).
- The strength of individual scripts were noted on a 7-point Likert scale, as well as if the script was presented traditionally or as "counter" stereotypical script.

Methods

- Inter-coder reliability was determined based on whether two or more trained coders identified the same script in an interaction. Intra-class correlations (2-way mixed) were conducted on the strength of the scripts ($\alpha = .75, \alpha = .92$).
- A similar process was used for the songs, except the lyrical and choreography aspects were separated. Each stanza was examined for the presence of scripts. Then choreography was examined for additional romantic/sexual scripts.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

- Romantic or sexual scripts were identified 93 times, with many scripts represented multiple times.
- Thirty-four romantic/sexual scripts were present lyrically within the songs, 21 scripts during song choreography, and 38 scripts in the non-musical portions of the movie.
- Overall, 24.8% of all the interactions within *Mulan* contained scripts, and 19 different scripts were illustrated.
- Of the scripts 95.7% were typical and only 4.3% were "counter" typical.

Results

Script Presence & Strength

- Results indicated that all seven types of romantic and sexual scripts were strongly represented.

Table 1

Strength of scripts presented in the musical and non-music portions of *Mulan*. Frequency and strength of the various different scripts provide a deeper nuance to this analysis.

	M	N
Female romantic	6.47	41
Female sexual	5.94	30
Male romantic	6.33	8
Male sexual	6.44	9
Recreational orientation	6.00	2
Relationship/marital orientation	5.25	2
Procreational orientation	7.00	1

Discussion

- The results support that Disney Princess movies include gendered romantic/sexual scripts, to which young children are exposed. Some were at high frequency and others high strength.
- This is of particular interest given that children often learn social norms from the media (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994).

Future Directions

- Further analysis of time-related trends for earlier versus later Disney Princess movies will be conducted.