

# Social media and misogyny



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Social media is defined as websites and application that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. In the last ten years, social media has proliferated and expanded exponentially. With this rapid increase and expansion of social media, social networking sites were born. Social media sites exhibited by Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram are a few examples of the popular social media sites used today. Through these social networking sites, it is noticeable that these websites reflect qualities of society.

Moreover, qualities such as, racism, sexism, ageism, classicism are all translated into social media sites. A notable quality in society that has a dominant influence in media and social media sites is misogyny. Misogyny is the hatred of women and is a feeling that can be translated or expressed in numerous ways, exhibited by denigration towards women, sexual objectification towards women and violence towards women. Misogyny sometimes has a subtle approach in society, exhibited by anchormen and women; the man is usually older, less attractive, but notice the women is virtually always beautiful and young.

An obvious display of misogyny is represented in modern hip-hop culture, where women are sexually objectified. Misogyny is institutionalized in our society and evidently holds a dominant place in social media. Misogyny is reflected in social media sites by female representation in media texts as sexual beings and female's acceptance to participate in her own degradation. Typically on social media sites, women are represented as sexual beings through various media texts. Youtube is the most dominant

social media site that disseminates misogynistic media texts. Youtube is known for being one of the largest databases of videos on the Internet.

Among those videos are music videos of every genre and hip-hop culture is widely renowned for their rap videos. Hip-hop culture advocates and disseminates sexual objectification through their music videos and explicit lyrics of women. The rapper Nelly has accomplished the highest form of misogyny through his music video Tip Drill. In this music video, women are parading around in bikinis (some without clothes), allowing money to be thrown at them and simulating sexual acts. This video is clearly misogynistic; visually and lyrically. An example of verses that degrade women is: "...it must be ya ass cause it ain't yo face, I need a tip drill.

He implies that a woman's body is attractive, but her face is far from attractive; the tip of a drill is usually damaged, thus referring to her face while the rest of the drill is intact. The term "tip drill" symbolizes sexual objectification. Moreover, Nelly creates an image of women being faceless by women positioned with their back faced to the camera a majority of the time, ergo taking away any connection from the women. His misogynistic music video is brought to a culmination by swiping a credit card down a woman's backside, reinforcing extreme sexual objectification.

The credit card scene illustrates misogyny by completely riding away all humanity from these women. During the credit card scene, the woman is faceless. By combining the theme of being faceless within the credit card scene, we lose a humane connection towards the woman, while reinforcing a depiction of women being property. Nelly's Tip Drill music video is evidently the quintessence of sexual objectification. Due to these misogynistic media

texts all over social media sites, young women are choosing to participate in their own degradation.

So why do women choose to participate in this misogyny and their own degradation? Social media sites allow for participatory culture to occur and are seen to be a democratization of information, but it can also be detrimental based on the information disseminated. Through the use of Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram, adolescent girls post videos and pictures sexually objectifying themselves. Furthermore, it has become a convention on social media sites to sexually objectify ones self through media texts.

Significantly enough, these girls are faceless in a majority of their “ twerk” videos and provocative pictures, a relevant theme within hip-hop culture’s rap videos. Females that choose to represent themselves through sexual objectification on social media sites illustrate acceptance of their own degradation, even though it is counterintuitive. We know that in our society we praise and prioritize external beauty more than internal beauty. On Instagram, the more skin a girl shows, the more likes her photo will get, ergo attaining an abundance of attention. Moreover, these girls fall victim to conformity.

Girls will use social media sites and constantly see other girls participate in sexual objectification. In return, girls will change their behaviour in accordance with the socially accepted convention of sexually objectifying ones self. When these girls conform they are falling into the principle of similarity; grouping themselves with people that participate in their own degradation. The girls need to open themselves to other platforms provided

by new media to expose themselves to new ideas or else girls will stay trapped in the patriarchy societal view.

The person at fault here is not the young impressionable girl or even the women in music videos, but rather the people who make these music videos exhibited by Nelly. Misogynistic media texts lead to girls sexually objectifying themselves on social media sites, which attracts more girls to conform and do the same. Furthermore, the contagious effect of women conforming to self-sexual objectification aids in the cycle of misogyny disseminated and proliferating through social media sites. Misogyny is absolutely represented in social media through sexually objectifying media texts and female's conformity to her own degradation.

Through the use of social media sites, videos and pictures of sexual objectification are constantly being disseminated. Due to media texts such as Tip Drill, young impressionable girls begin to self-degrade themselves to meet the warm approval of society, falling victim to conformity. Remember, even though it is counterintuitive for girls to participate in misogyny, we cannot completely put blame them for their decision. Misogyny is institutionalized in our society and it has a correlation with social media. Social media creates a new and wider platform for misogyny to be disseminated.

This new platform added with participatory culture facilitates young girls conforming to participate in their own degradation. Now these girls become a constituent part of patriarchy societal view, but this can be broken. What is happening is that young girls are falling under the principle of similarity and they must challenge themselves not to conform to what other girls practice

on social media. Girls must force themselves to use the vast amount of platforms provided by new media so they expose themselves to new ideas, not to expose their body parts.