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Acquiescing to the Script: A Panel Study of College Students' Sexual Media Habits, Endorsement of Heteronormative Scripts, and Their Hesitance Toward Resisting Unwanted Hookups

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Abstract

The present study set out to better understand how sexual entertainment media may be related to college students' heteronormative beliefs about sexuality and how these beliefs may be related to college students' hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. In a 2-month two-panel survey, cross-lagged models found 292 U.S. college women's sexual media habits were related to higher endorsement of heteronormative scripts, and their endorsement of heteronormative scripts were related to a hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. In addition, a half longitudinal mediation model found college women's sexual media habits were indirectly related to a greater hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups through their endorsement of heteronormative scripts. The same analyses involving 88 U.S. college men were not significant, although the sample size for men did not reach the level needed for statistical power. These results provide some initial evidence that college women's, but not men's, hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups could be related to beliefs reinforced by their habits regarding sexual entertainment media, which suggests the importance of educating young adult women about sexual agency, consent, and how to combat the role to which they are relegated within heteronormative scripts.

Keywords Psychosexual development · Sexual attitudes · Sexual risk taking · Media exposure

In the United States, one in five women experienced a completed or attempted rape or sexual assault in their lifetime (Smith et al. 2017). When acts of physical-contact sexual violence that do not fit the definition of rape or sexual assault are taken into consideration, about one in three women are affected. Regarding men, 7.4% experience some form of rape or sexual assault and 17.1% experience contact sexual violence. The National Crime Victimization Survey has stopped comparing rape and sexual assault frequency by age, but in 2000 those aged 12–34 years-old were at highest risk of becoming a victim of sexual violence (Rennison 2001). Part of the reason for why sexual assault rates are higher among 12–34 year-olds

is because of the prevalence of rape and sexual assault in college. A recent survey of undergraduates and graduates at 27 universities in the United States reported that an average of 21% of undergraduate seniors reported they had experienced an attempted or completed rape or sexual assault since entering college (Cantor et al. 2015). Women were even more affected with 33% reporting that they had experienced an attempted or completed rape or sexual assault since entering college.

One reason for the higher rates of rape and sexual assault in U.S. colleges may be due to the hookup culture. Hookups, or sexual encounters between uncommitted partners, occur at rates between 60 and 80% among college students (Garcia et al. 2012), and as many as 78% of college students' unwanted sexual experiences occur as hookups (Flack et al. 2007). These *unwanted hookups* are defined as such because at least one of the partners did not want to engage in a sexual behavior with their uncommitted partner. Unwanted hookups can range from unwanted kissing or touching to rape or sexual assault, but the present study is primarily concerned with the unwanted sexual acts in which one person does not want to have sex, but does not clearly say "no" or physically resist. Thus, the

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hesitance to resist unwanted hookups variable in this study only describes the actions taken by the partner who does not want the sex, not the actions taken by the person initiating sex. There are many risk factors associated with unwanted sex, such as alcohol and numerous sex partners (Krebs et al. 2007), but one factor that has not received much study is social coercion (Finkelhor and Yllö 1987). *Social coercion* is defined as an indirect pressure to participate in unwanted sexual acts because of a perceived obligation to adhere to social and cultural gender role expectations.

Research has shown sexual entertainment media can cultivate rape- and hookup-supportive attitudes and beliefs (Aubrey and Smith 2015; Bogle 2008; Burnett et al. 2009; Peters 2012) and that unwanted sex, especially in hookups, may be supported or condoned by these attitudes and beliefs (Bay-Cheng and Eliseo-Arras 2008; Flack et al. 2007). Therefore, I argue that sexual entertainment media may be a form of social coercion that could make college students less resistant to unwanted hookups. To determine what associations there may be between sexual entertainment media exposure, endorsement of heteronormative scripts, and the hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups, I conducted a two-panel longitudinal survey among college students over the course of 2 months.

Emerging Adults and Hookups

College students are going through a unique period of development called emerging adulthood, which is a period of role experimentation and identity development that occurs in the late teens and early twenties (Arnett 2000). Without parental supervision and with more independence, emerging adults are free to experiment sexually. Thus, emerging adulthood is the time when most people begin to explore their sexual identities (Arnett 2000; Morgan 2013; Shulman and Connolly 2013). Many emerging U.S. adults are in college while they are developing and experimenting with new sexual identities, and hookups are a prevalent behavior on college campuses. Because hooking up is more common when school is in session, it seems as though the college environment may facilitate hookup behavior (Fielder et al. 2013). College is also a time in which many emerging adults experiment with drugs and alcohol (O'Malley and Johnston 2002), which may reduce inhibitions and increase the probability of hooking up.

Despite the fact that hookups are often positive experiences, the popularity of hooking up on college campuses has become a concern for sexual health scholars (Fielder and Carey 2010; Fielder et al. 2014; Heldman and Wade 2010; Katz et al. 2012; Paul and Hayes 2002). Sexual health scholars are not concerned that college students are engaging in more sex; they are concerned about the nature of sex in hookups. Emerging adults are not engaging in more sexual activity than

in previous decades, but they are engaging in more sexual activity with partners with whom they are less familiar than was done in previous decades (Monto and Carey 2014). In addition, U.S. college students, on average, report between 1 and 3 oral sex and intercourse hookups per month, which suggests hookup behavior does not follow a regular pattern; it is spontaneous (Monto and Carey 2014). Lastly, hookups tend to involve the use of alcohol and drugs (Claxton et al. 2015). Because of the lack of familiarity between partners in hookups, the spontaneous nature of hookups, and the frequent inclusion of alcohol in hookups, partners may have quite different expectations when hooking up. If they do not communicate these expectations, it could lead to partners having very different ideas regarding consent and safe sex practices. When left to determine one another's motivations and desires from contextual cues, it is likely that emerging adults, especially those with less sexual experience, will turn to culturally defined sexual scripts to help them determine what is, or is not, appropriate behavior.

Heteronormative Scripts

Heteronormativity is the idea that in a multitude of ways (e.g., family life, social interaction, organizational norms, mediated messages) heterosexuality gives structure and order to our everyday lives (Jackson 2006; Kitzinger 2005; Martin and Kazyak 2009). Jackson (2006) also points out that normative heterosexuality not just prescribes the roles of those within its boundaries, but it also marginalizes those outside of them. In general, most sexual behavior is guided by sexual scripts and gender norms (Leigh 1989). Sexual scripts are learned mental representations that guide sexual behavior, and they can be learned from a variety of sources, such as friends, family, and media (Simon and Gagnon 1986). Scripts act "as the organization of mutually shared conventions that allows two or more actors to participate in a complex act requiring mutual dependence" (Gagnon and Simon 1973, p. 18). Much like a play, sexual scripts can provide information about who will do what, when, how, and why in sexual situations. Rather than believing that sex is driven by innate sex drives, Gagnon and Simon (1974) believed that sexuality was the result of a learning how to interpret and enact sexual scripts.

Simon and Gagnon (1986) define three levels of scripts: cultural scenarios, interpersonal scripts, and intrapsychic scripts. Cultural scenarios are "the instructional guides that exist at the level of collective life" that "essentially instruct in the narrative requirements of specific roles" (Simon and Gagnon 1986, p. 98). Intrapsychic scripts originate from the self and are experienced as our private wishes and desires. In between cultural scenarios and intrapsychic scripts are interpersonal scripts. Interpersonal scripts are context-specific guides for behavior derived from an individual's attempt to

make the appropriate identities prescribed by the cultural scenarios congruent with their own wishes and desires (i.e., intrapsychic scripts). Interpersonal scripts, then, can vary based on the individual and the situation. Sometimes interpersonal scripts may be only slight variations of cultural scenarios, whereas at other times they are complete improvisations based mostly on one's intrapsychic scripts.

I define heteronormative scripts as cultural-level scripts that prescribe heteronormative roles and behaviors for sexual situations. Following from Simon and Gagnon's (1986) scripting theory, we learn these scripts from a variety of sources (e.g., friends, family, and media) and they will likely inform, in part, our sexual interpersonal scripts and behavior. I would like describe two types of heteronormative scripts that may arise in unwanted sexual situations: rape myths and traditional heterosexual scripts.

Rape myths are the "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression towards women" (Lonsway and Fitzgerald 1994, p. 134). Rape myths often describe how rape occurs and what roles should be enacted (e.g., "It wasn't really rape"; "She asked for it"; Payne et al. 1999). Thus, rape myths may be associated with people's behavior in unwanted sexual situations. For example, women's acceptance of rape myths was associated with less adequate rape prevention behavior (Hickman and Muehlenhard 1997; Peterson and Muehlenhard 2004), and men's acceptance of rape myths was associated with higher rape proclivity (Bohner et al. 2006). Token resistance beliefs are specific type of rape myth that supports the belief that women frequently mean "yes" when they say "no" to sex (Muehlenhard and Rodgers 1998). If a man were to believe that women often employ token resistance, it would likely cause confusion about a woman's sexual consent, which could result in unwanted sex.

Traditional heterosexual scripts are culturally defined sexual scripts that prescribe what behaviors are considered appropriate for men and women in sexual situations and are typically highly gendered (Kim et al. 2007; Masters et al. 2013; Sakaluk et al. 2014). Within traditional heterosexual scripts, men and women fulfill opposite but complementary roles in sexual encounters. Men are expected to have strong sex drives, initiate and push sex to the next level of intimacy, be sexually skilled, and prefer physically pleasurable recreational sex over emotionally intimate relational sex. On the other hand, women are expected to be desirable to men (i.e., sex objects), but not to desire sex themselves. They are expected to have weak sex drives compared to men's, to resist sexual advances (i.e., be a gatekeeper), and to prefer relational sex and emotional intimacy over recreational sex and physical pleasure.

I am interested in understanding the role that sexual entertainment media plays in fostering college students'

endorsement of heteronormative scripts. Sexual entertainment media is the sexual content that college students consume through various entertainment mediums, such as television, movies, and music videos. Pornography is not included as sexual entertainment media because (a) pornography is generally sought out for arousal and education, rather than for entertainment (Short et al. 2012); (b) pornographic material is more sexually explicit than are sexual entertainment media, which may complicate the interpretations college students would have about each type of content; (c) men and women have different reactions and interpretations to sexually explicit content (van Oosten et al. 2015a); and (d) many studies have already been performed that look at how pornography influences people's sexual attitudes and behaviors. (For reviews, see Peter and Valkenburg 2016; Short et al. 2012.)

Multiple literature reviews have noted that traditional heterosexual scripts are prevalent in multiple forms of entertainment media (Collins 2011; Stern and Brown 2008; Ward 2003; Wright 2009). Overall, content analyses find media's depictions of sex continue to follow traditional norms for heterosexual conduct. On television, men are portrayed as sexual "players," valuing sexual fulfillment over emotional intimacy (Kim et al. 2007), and women are portrayed as sexual objects responsible for setting sexual limits passively (Ward 1995). In movies, women are portrayed as not having autonomous sexual desire apart from men's (S. H. Smith 2012), and are valued by men for their appearance (Martin and Kazyak 2009). In music videos, men are portrayed as aggressive and dominant whereas women are sexually objectified and subservient (Arnett 2002; Hansen and Hansen 2000; Sommers-Flanagan et al. 1993). Magazines uphold the sexual double standard that men are more sexual than women are; convey confusing, ambivalent messages to women about their sexual role; and primarily position women as lacking desire and agency, but being ultimately responsible for their actions (Carpenter 1998; Durham 1998; Joshi et al. 2010, 2011).

There is only one known content analysis specifically analyzing media content for rape myths. Brinson (1992) examined 26 primetime television storylines that referenced rape and found that, on average, each storyline contained at least one rape myth. Despite the lack of content analyses, multiple studies have found exposure to television, music videos, and sexually violent videos is associated with rape myth acceptance (Aubrey et al. 2011; Emmers-Sommer et al. 2006; Kahlor and Eastin 2011).

There have been many advances in gender equality in our society, but rape myths and traditional heterosexual scripts are still found in emerging adults' ideas about sex (Kim and Ward 2004; McMahon 2010; ter Bogt et al. 2010; Tolman et al. 2007; Ward 2002), as well as in their interpersonal scripts for how to behave in sexual situations (Eaton and Rose 2011; Masters et al. 2013; Sakaluk et al. 2014). Although both genders report endorsing rape myths and traditional

heterosexual scripts, women, more so than men, report that their sexual thoughts and feelings often revolve around the limits and contexts in which sexual behavior is acceptable (Maas et al. 2015).

Endorsing rape myths and traditional heterosexual scripts may lead college students to feel more hesitant toward resisting unwanted hookups. As Eaton and Matamala (2014) found, endorsing heteronormative beliefs, like traditional heterosexual scripts, predicted more acceptance and experience with verbal sexual coercion among male and female college students. In addition, women who internalized traditional gender norms tended to base their self-esteem on others' approval, which may result in them feeling less sexual autonomy and experiencing less sexual pleasure (Sanchez et al. 2005). Similarly, acceptance of rape myths may give women the illusion that they are not in danger of being raped, which then may prevent them from learning self-defensive and protective behaviors (Bohner 1998), or may prevent women from reporting their rape or sexual assault to authorities (Peterson and Muehlenhard 2004). Because men's role in rape myths and traditional heterosexual scripts suggest to always be ready for sex and to have sex with as many women as possible (Kim et al. 2007; Seabrook et al. 2016), endorsing these heteronormative scripts may lead men to feel they should engage in sexual behavior whenever they can, even in situations these behaviors are unwanted.

It is important that we examine how emerging adults' ideas about their own sexuality may be shaped by the media's reliance on rape myths and traditional heterosexual scripts (from here on referred to as heteronormative scripts) and, in turn, may be increasing emerging adults' hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. The following section describes the theoretical framework used to explain these proposed relationships.

Media Practice Model

Because emerging adults are experimenting with their sexual identities, sexual entertainment media can provide them with information about what sexual identities are available to them. The media practice model explains how emerging adults use media in developing their sexual identities (Steele and Brown 1995). Based on a uses and gratifications approach, the media practice model argues emerging adults will select and react to media in ways that confirm their salient identities. Because many emerging adults are beginning to experiment sexually (Guttmacher Institute 2013), their salient sexual identity will influence the type of media content they choose (e.g., sexual entertainment media), and this content will both reinforce and further develop their sexual identity (Slater 2007).

The process proposed by the media practice model involves three main components: selection, interaction, and application (Steele and Brown 1995). Selection involves choosing and attending to media, and it is influenced by an individual's motivations. Interaction is the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement an individual has with media. Application is the way in which media is used by individuals. Two types of application are discussed by Steele and Brown (1995): appropriation and incorporation. Appropriation is goal-oriented, active media use, such as enhancing one's mood. Incorporation is building upon one's pre-existing attitudes and beliefs by borrowing from the messages conveyed from the media. The hypothesized process described in my study would be a part of the application component of the media practice model. Specifically, it would be a process of incorporation because the ideas learned from media "literally become a part of the self, often in relatively automatic, not consciously intended, ways" (Steele and Brown 1995, p. 559).

Scripting Framework

To describe how this incorporation occurs, a scripting framework guided by Huesmann's (1986) cognitive processing model is used. Huesmann borrows from Bandura's (1977) social learning theory for his cognitive information processing model. According to Huesmann, four steps are involved in the process of acquiring a script through observation: attention, rehearsal, retrieval, and utilization. First, a script must be perceived as salient to get the attention of the observer. When observing, the details that are important to the observer's goals or motives at the time will be encoded (Owens et al. 1979). Scripts are more likely to be acquired when (a) the model performing the script is similar, (b) the viewer identifies with the model, (c) the context is realistic, and (d) the viewed behavior is rewarded (Bandura 1977).

Second, in order to remember the script, it must be rehearsed (Huesmann 1986). Because rehearsal sometimes requires considerable elaboration, individuals may abstract elements from scripts to create more general strategies for behavior that will make behavioral decisions easier in the future. These abstracted scripts are similar to what Simon and Gagnon (1986) referred to as cultural scenarios, and they reflect what I refer to as heteronormative scripts.

Lastly, in order for the script to influence future behavior, the script must be retrieved from memory and utilized (Huesmann 1986). When individuals are faced with a social problem, they search their memory for a script that can guide their behavior in that moment. Because most individuals only perform this search until they have found a sufficient behavioral solution for their problem (Wyer and Srull 1986), scripts that best match the demands of their present situation and are easily remembered will be utilized. It is important to remember here how Simon and Gagnon (1986) described the scripting process. They argued that the sexual scripts that

guide our sexual behavior are not just step-by-step instructions based on our ideas about what is considered culturally appropriate for the situation (e.g., heteronormative scripts), they are a mixture of those ideas and our personal desires (i.e., intrapsychic scripts), and they can have varying amounts of information derived from those constructs. Once we have enacted a sexual script, positively reinforced behaviors will become more accessible (Bandura 1977). The media practice model and scripting framework I discussed here helps explain how college students' salient sexual identities may be guiding their selection of sexual media, how heteronormative scripts may be acquired from their sexual media habits, and how these scripts may impact their sexual behavior.

The Present Study

Following from the media practice model and scripting framework, cross-sectional survey and experimental studies confirm that exposure to television, magazines, and music videos can increase endorsement of heteronormative scripts (Kim and Ward 2004; van Oosten et al. 2015b; Ward 2002). Frequent television viewing is associated with college students' greater support of sexual stereotypes (e.g., men are sex-driven, women are sex objects, recreational sex is fun) (Ward 2002). Reading adult women's magazines (e.g., *Cosmopolitan*) is associated with weaker support of sexual stereotypes about men, with the view that sex is risky, and with notions women should self-censor, whereas reading teen magazines (e.g., *Seventeen*) is associated with stronger endorsement of stereotypes about men (Kim and Ward 2004). Lastly, van Oosten et al. (2015b) found that viewing sexual music videos by male artists was associated with increased endorsement of token resistance among heterosexual female adolescents. Given findings that frequent engagement with sexual media is associated with college students' endorsement of heteronormative scripts, I propose that college students' sexual media habits at Time 1 will positively predict their endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2, that is, 2 months later (Hypothesis 1).

Endorsing heteronormative scripts may increase women's hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups because they teach women that they should prioritize men's desire and pleasure over their own (Gavey 1992) and they undermine women's sexual agency (Crawford et al. 1994; Tolman et al. 2007). Men's hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups may also increase from endorsing heteronormative scripts because these scripts emphasize that their masculinity is defined by their sexual skill and experience (Eaton and Rose 2011). Studies have shown that watching sexual music videos increases men's and women's endorsement of rape-supportive attitudes and beliefs, such as token resistance (Treat et al. 2015; van Oosten et al.

2015a, b), and their acceptance of verbal coercion or personal experience with being a victim or perpetrator of verbal sexual coercion (Eaton and Matamala 2014).

No known study has yet explained or tested the influence of sexual media exposure on college students' hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. Related studies have demonstrated that sexual media habits indirectly influence college students' hookup experiences through their endorsement of the hookup culture (Peters 2012) and that believing the media contains influential sexual information directly influences college women's acquiescence to unwanted sexual contact (Conroy et al. 2014). Because the roles prescribed by heteronormative scripts relegate women to passively acquiesce and men to aggressively seek out sex, heterosexual college students who endorse these scripts may become more hesitant toward resisting unwanted hookups. Thus, I posed two hypotheses: (a) College students' endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 will positively predict their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 (Hypothesis 2 and (b) College students' sexual media habits at Time 1 will be indirectly related to their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 through their endorsement of heteronormative scripts (Hypothesis 3).

Method

Design and Procedures

The purpose of my study was to discover whether heterosexual college students' sexual media habits may be indirectly related to their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups through their endorsement of heteronormative scripts. To achieve this goal, I conducted a 2-month panel survey design with a sample of undergraduate students from a U.S. Southwestern university. The first panel was collected during a 2-week period between February 29, 2016 and March 15, 2016, and the second panel was collected during a 2-week period between April 20, 2016 and May 4, 2016. The first panel was collected just before spring break, and the second panel was collected just before the end of the spring semester. This 2-month time period was chosen because evidence suggests unwanted sexual experiences often occur over spring break (Maticka-Tyndale et al. 1998) and because college students often engage in increased partying and drinking on spring break, which increases their chances of unwanted sexual experiences (Sönmez et al. 2006).

A pretest and pilot test were conducted with separate samples from the main study. The pretest served to identify what media vehicles should be included in the sexual media habits measure and determine what the sexy ratings for each of these media vehicles should be. The pilot test was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the hesitance toward resisting

unwanted hookups measure developed for my study. The measure-specific procedures and results are reported in the following Measures section.

Participants

For the pretest and panel surveys, students were recruited from a large U.S. Southwestern university. For the pilot test, Mturk participants between the ages of 18 and 26 and enrolled in a U.S. college were recruited by posting an announcement on Mturk about the opportunity to participate in a short survey for $1 USD. The pretest sample consisted of 217 participants. Of the pretest sample participants, 59 (27.1%) were men and 158 (72.8%) were women. Their ages ranged from 18 to 31 ($M = 20.73$, $SD = 1.35$), and most were heterosexual ($n = 209$, 96.3%) and White ($n = 172$, 79.3%). The pilot test sample consisted of 321 participants. Of the pilot test sample participants, 164 (51.1%) were men and 157 (48.9%) were women. Their ages ranged from 18 to 26 ($M = 22.08$, $SD = 1.62$), and most were heterosexual ($n = 263$, 81.9%) and White ($n = 234$, 72.9%). Participants from the pretest and pilot samples were not eligible to take the panel surveys.

In the first wave of the panel survey, there were 467 participants. In the second wave, there were 448 participants. Therefore, attrition was 4.1%. To determine whether attrition biased the data for the panel survey, t-tests were conducted that compared the means of those who only completed the first survey, and those who completed both surveys (Menard 1991). Only one variable, age, showed a significant difference between those who only completed the first study, and those who completed both studies. Younger participants were more likely to complete both surveys, maybe because the second survey was to be completed during the last 2 weeks of the spring semester when upper-class student may be busier or less invested than lower-class students.

An additional 14.6% ($n = 68$) of participants were removed from the sample because they could not be matched between surveys ($n = 23$), they did not report their gender ($n = 3$), they had extreme or illogical responses ($n = 5$), they were over the age of 25 ($n = 8$), or they were non-heterosexual ($n = 29$). The eight adults over the age of 25 were removed because I was mostly interested in emerging adults, which generally refers to people aged 18–25 (Arnett 2000). Sexual minority participants were removed because the sexual questions in the survey were worded and validated for heterosexuals. The final sample for the panel survey consisted of 380 participants. Of the final sample participants, 88 (23.2%) were men and 292 (76.8%) were women. Their ages ranged from 18 to 25 years-old ($M = 20.2$, $SD = 1.43$). A majority identified themselves as White (71.3%; $n = 271$), followed by Hispanic (16.1%; $n = 61$), Asian (3.9%; $n = 15$), African American (3.7%; $n = 14$), other (3.4%; $n = 13$), and Native American (1.6%; $n = 6$). Additional t-tests were conducted to determine whether the

participants who were retained scored differently than those who were excluded on any of the main study variables, but no significant differences were detected.

Measures

The following section describes the scales that I used in the present study. The most reliable items for each of these scales were used to create parcels to reduce the number of indicators for each latent construct. Each parcel was created by averaging the most reliable items together. Little (2013) suggests parceling indicators that are congeneric and unidimensional as well as can increase the reliability of the construct, provide greater communality, increase the ratio of common-to-unique factor variance, lower the likelihood of distributional violations, and provide better intervals. Reliability statistics are provided for the scales used in the parcels for both waves and stability statistics are provided for the latent constructs.

Sexual Media Habits

The techniques of J. D. Brown et al. (2006) were followed to create the sexual media habits variable. First, an index was constructed of media options, or "vehicles," that reflected both the amount and extremity of their sexual content. Pretest participants were instructed to list their top 10 television shows, movies, music videos, and magazines. From this list, the 10 most reported media vehicles were retained for the main study. (I have included a list of the media vehicles and the percentage of pretest participants reporting these vehicles in the online supplement; see Table 1s.)

Second, in the pilot test, Mturk participants judged the amount of sexual content in each of the media vehicles. Each judge was asked to rate the amount of portrayals or references to sexual content contained in the each of the media vehicles. Using a 5-point scale, ranging from 0 (*no sexual content*) to 4 (*a lot of sexual content*), the judges were given these instructions: "Rate the amount of portrayals or references each television show, movie, music video, or magazine features regarding its sexual content, including romantic relationships, body exposure or nudity, sexual innuendo, touching and kissing, and/or sexual intercourse" (adapted from J. D. Brown et al. 2006). If the judges were not familiar with a media vehicle, they were given the option to not rate it. For a media vehicle to be kept for the main sample, the following criteria had to be met: (a) the standard deviations of the media vehicles' sexual content ratings could not exceed 2.00 (on a 5-point scale) and (b) at least half of the pilot participants must have rated them (Peters 2012). All of the media vehicles met these criteria when averaged across specific examples: TV ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .94$), Movies ($M = 2.77$, $SD = .98$), Music videos ($M = 2.86$, $SD = 1.19$), and Magazines ($M = 3.03$,

$SD = 1.09$). The mean rating for each vehicle determines the "sexiness" of each vehicle. (Table 1s in the online supplement reports the means and standard deviations of the sexiness ratings for each of the media vehicles.)

Third, the panel survey participants were asked to rate how often they spend time with the 40 media vehicles on a 6-point scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 5 (all of the time). The frequency scores were multiplied by the sexiness scores for each of the media vehicles. The highest score on each of the sexual media habit (SMH) indexes could be (5[frequency] * 6[sexual content rating]) = 30. The frequency * sexiness scores for the 10 media vehicles within each medium were averaged together to create parcels for each medium.

To assess the reliabilities of the SMH indexes, traditional methods such as Cronbach's alpha could not be used because the SMH indexes were composites of each individual's amount and extremity of sexual content consumed. Therefore, the standard deviations for each of the media vehicles rated were examined to determine whether the raters in the pilot test were consistent in their ratings of the sexual content in each media vehicle. (Table 1s in the online supplement reports the average standard deviations of the sexiness ratings within each type of media.) All of the individual standard deviations were under 1.36 on a 5-point scale, and the average standard deviations of each category ranged from .94 to 1.19. Raters were moderately consistent in their ratings of sexual content, and the deviations were similar to those found in other studies (Aubrey et al. 2003; Gamble and Nelson 2015).

The latent construct for SMH was composed of the four sexual media indices. The loadings for each of the indices were all above .60 indicating the factors explained the construct well. In addition, the modification indices did not suggest the SMH construct needed to be modified. The SMH construct was stable across the two waves ($r = .80$, $p < .001$).

Endorsement of Heteronormative Scripts

This construct was measured using items from three scales: seven items from the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance (IRMA) scale short form (Payne et al. 1999), four items from the Token Resistance to Sex Scale (TRSS) (Osman 1998), and six items from the "men are sex driven" subscale and five items from the "women are sex objects" subscales of the Attitudes Towards Dating and Relationships (ATDR) measure (Ward and Rivadeneyra 1999). Each of the scales addressed conceptually distinct, but correlated, heteronormative scripts. Together they represent a belief construct that privileges heteronormative gender behavior while denouncing non-heteronormative gender behavior. All of the items were measured using a 7-point scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicated stronger endorsement of heteronormative scripts. Cronbach's alpha for the

IRMA scale items was .89 at Time 1 and .94 at Time 2. Cronbach's alpha for the TRSS scale items was .71 at Time 1 and .79 at Time 2. The rape myths and token resistance scales were so highly correlated that they were causing the model to be non-positive definite. Therefore, a parcel was created by averaging together the rape myths and token resistance scales. Cronbach's alpha for the "men are sex driven" items was .81 at Time 1 and .86 at Time 2. Cronbach's alpha for the "women are sex objects" items was .71 at Time 1 and .77 at Time 2. The "men are sex driven" and "women are sex objects" parcels were created by averaging together the items from each scale into separate parcels.

The latent construct for endorsement of heteronormative scripts was composed of three parcels: (a) the rape myths and token resistance scales, (b) the "men are sex driven" scale, and (c) the "women are sex objects" scales. The loadings for the three parcels were above .60, and the modification indices did not indicate the construct required any changes. The scripts construct had good stability between Time 1 and Time 2 ($r = .85$, $p < .001$).

Hesitance toward Resisting Unwanted Hookups

No known previous measure existed to assess one's resistance to unwanted sexual advances, so I developed a measure that assessed college students' hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. All participants were told to read each scenario and imagine how they would feel if put in that situation. They read about three different unwanted hookup scenarios: (a) going to a party with friends, meeting someone at the party, and going back to this person's place to "watch a movie"; (b) going on a date with someone met through a friend and going back to this person's place after dinner to "hang out"; and (c) hanging out and playing video games with a past hookup partner. Each of the scenarios ended with the same conundrum: the partner suggests he/she would like to engage in sexual relations, but you are not ready or prepared to engage in sexual relations with this person. (The full text of the scenarios can be found in the online supplement.) After reading each scenario, participants were asked to rate the extent they agreed or disagreed on a 7-point scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) with 15 statements about their perceived resistance to their partner's sexual advances to kiss, touch, perform oral sex, receive oral sex, and engage in sexual intercourse with them in these scenarios. The statements were derived from the sexual assertiveness scale refusal subscale (Morokoff et al. 1997), and there were three statements per sexual behavior. The items referred to a female partner for men and a male partner for women. (The full list of items can be found in the online supplement.)

A CFA confirmed that the five-factor structure was the best fit for the hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups measure, including kissing, touching, performing

oral sex, receiving oral sex, and sexual intercourse. The CFA reached strong invariance between men and women. The measure had convergent, divergent, and concurrent validity, and an excerpt of these analyses from Gamble (2016) is provided in the online supplement.

Data Analyses

Data analyses were conducted using the Lavaan structural equation modeling (SEM) package (Rosseel 2012) in the statistical software R (R Development Core Team 2013). Analyses proceeded as followed: (a) Time 1 and Time 2 datasets were cleaned and merged, (b) longitudinal CFAs were run and measurement invariance across time was assessed, (c) cross-lagged models were specified and tested for Hypotheses 1 and 2, and (d) half-longitudinal mediation models were specified and tested for Hypothesis 3. Missing data were handled using listwise deletion.

Because the sexual double standard sets different standards of sexual permissiveness for women and men (Crawford and Popp 2003), I felt it was pertinent to study women and men separately. Additionally, due to the voluntary sampling, women outnumbered men in this sample 2:1. As T. A. Brown (2015) has warned, when groups have different sample sizes, the larger group contributes more to model fit than the smaller group. Thus, I decided that estimating the hypotheses separately for men and women would provide a more accurate picture of the effects observed. An a priori analysis of power was conducted using Soper's (2015) a priori sample size calculator for structural equation models to determine the appropriate sample size for the proposed data analyses. The analysis revealed a sample size of 157 would be required to obtain statistical significance at $p < .05$ if the average effect size was .20 with a power of .80. The sample size for men fell short of this requirement ($n = 88$).

Longitudinal CFAs were constructed and tested for measurement invariance across time for men and women separately. The fit for both men and women was good (CFI > .95). To determine whether the invariance constraints held, the cutoff specified by Cheung and Rensvold (2002) of a change in CFI of .01 between the less constrained and the more constrained models was used. The models for both men and women achieved full strict invariance. (Tables 2s and 3s summarizing the measurement invariance results can be found in the online supplement.)

Individual cross-lagged path analyses were conducted for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 separately for men and women to determine the directionality of the proposed relationships between the variables in the model. Paths between the Time 1 predictor and Time 2 outcome variables were constructed while controlling for the stability of the variables across time. In addition, the covariances between the variables within each time period were freely estimated.

For Hypothesis 3, separate half-longitudinal mediation models were constructed for men and women. The half-longitudinal mediation design is an improvement over a cross-sectional mediation design because it allows one to test the significance of the associations between the variables while controlling for the mediator and dependent variables at Time 1 (Cole and Maxwell 2003; Little 2013). The indirect effect was calculated by multiplying the a and b paths together. The significance of the indirect effect was determined by the bootstrapped 95% confidence interval. Like any longitudinal structural model, the covariances between the variables within each time period (i.e., Time 1 and Time 2) were freely estimated and the strong invariance constraints (i.e., equal loadings and intercepts for the indicators across time) were kept in the model, as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). Model fit was evaluated using multiple fit criteria. Because the Chi-square fit test has been criticized for being biased toward being significant with large sample sizes and for other undesirable qualities (Bentler 1990; Bollen 1989), the comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) were used as criteria for fit.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

As seen in Table 1, the means for men's endorsement of heteronormative scripts and their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups were higher than women's at Time 1 and Time 2, whereas women's mean for sexual media habits was higher than men's. The correlations show that women's sexual media habits at Time 1 were not significantly associated with their endorsement of heteronormative scripts or hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. Men's sexual media habits at Time 1 were significantly associated with their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 1, but not to the other variables. Stronger correlations were found between both women's and men's endorsement of heteronormative scripts and their hesitance towards resisting unwanted hookups. This pattern suggests that if there is relationship between women's and men's sexual media habits and the other study variables it will be small and that there is greater evidence of a relationship between their endorsement of heteronormative scripts and their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups.

Testing Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that college students' sexual media habits (SMH) at Time 1 would predict their endorsement of

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables

Variables	Women M (SD)	Men M (SD)	t	Cohen's d	Correlations				
					1	2	3	4	5
Exogenous variables									
1. Time 1 SMH	6.38(1.39)	6.02(1.29)	89.35***	.27	–	.02	.08	−.09	.07
Endogenous variables									
2. Time 2 endorsement of heteronormative scripts	2.47(.89)	3.28(1.10)	51.82***	−.81	.11	–	.40***	.80***	.35***
3. Time 2 hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups	2.24(.98)	3.81(1.53)	38.66***	−1.25	.16	.43***	–	.33***	.67***
Time 1 control variables									
4. Time 1 endorsement of heteronormative scripts	2.50(.82)	3.18(.84)	59.10***	−.82	.05	.58***	.32**	–	.32***
5. Time 1 hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups	2.11(.96)	3.88(1.48)	36.97***	−1.45	.23*	.35***	.69***	.34**	–

Correlations for women ($n = 292$) are reported above the diagonal; for men ($n = 88$), below

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$

heteronormative scripts at Time 2. Hypothesis 1 was analyzed by conducting cross-lagged path analyses separately for men and women. For women, the fit of the cross-lagged model was good, $\chi^2(74) = 125.10$, $p < .001$ (CMIN/DF = 1.69, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05, TLI = .97). The results indicated the relationship between women's SMH and endorsement of heteronormative scripts was unidirectional. Women's SMH at Time 1 positively predicted their endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2 ($\beta = .11$, $p = .03$, but endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 did not predict SMH at Time 2 ($\beta = .00$, $p = .98$) (see Fig. 1a). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported for women.

The fit of the cross-lagged model for men was also good, $\chi^2(74) = 107.44$, $p < .001$ (CMIN/DF = 1.45, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .07, TLI = .94). Unlike women, the results of the cross-lagged model for men revealed there was not a relationship between SMH at Time 1 and endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2 ($\beta = .03$, $p = .84$) or between endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 and SMH at Time 2 ($\beta = .13$, $p = .47$) (see Fig. 1b). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported for men, although this conclusion remains inconclusive because of sample size concerns. Together, the results suggested Hypothesis 1 was only partially supported because there was only a relationship between SMH and endorsement of heteronormative scripts among women.

Testing Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that college students' endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 would positively predict their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2. Hypothesis 2 was analyzed in the same way as Hypothesis 1. The fit of the cross-lagged model for women was good, $\chi^2(86) = 106.43$, $p < .001$ (CMIN/DF = 1.23, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .03, SRMR = .05, TLI = .99) (see Fig. 2a). The

results indicated the relationship between women's endorsement of heteronormative scripts and hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups was unidirectional. Women's endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 positively predicted their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 ($\beta = .24$, $p = .001$), but their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 1 did not predict their endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2 ($\beta = .10$, $p = .06$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported for women.

Men's cross-lagged model fit was good as well, $\chi^2(86) = 138.35$, $p < .001$ (CMIN/DF = 1.61, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07, TLI = .95) (see Fig. 2b). The paths show that there was not a relationship between men's endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 and their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 ($\beta = .13$, $p = .16$) or between their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 1 and their endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2 ($\beta = .12$, $p = .41$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was not supported for men, although this conclusion remains inconclusive because of sample size concerns. In total, Hypothesis 2 was only partially supported because only women's endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 was related to their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2.

Testing Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that college students' sexual media habits (SMH) at Time 1 would be indirectly related to their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 through their endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2. Hypothesis 3 was analyzed using half-longitudinal meditational models for men and women with Time 1 controls. The mediation model for women had good fit, $\chi^2(149) = 179.68$, $p < .001$ (CMIN/DF = 1.20, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .03, SRMR = .05, TLI = .99) (see Fig. 3a). The direct path from women's SMH
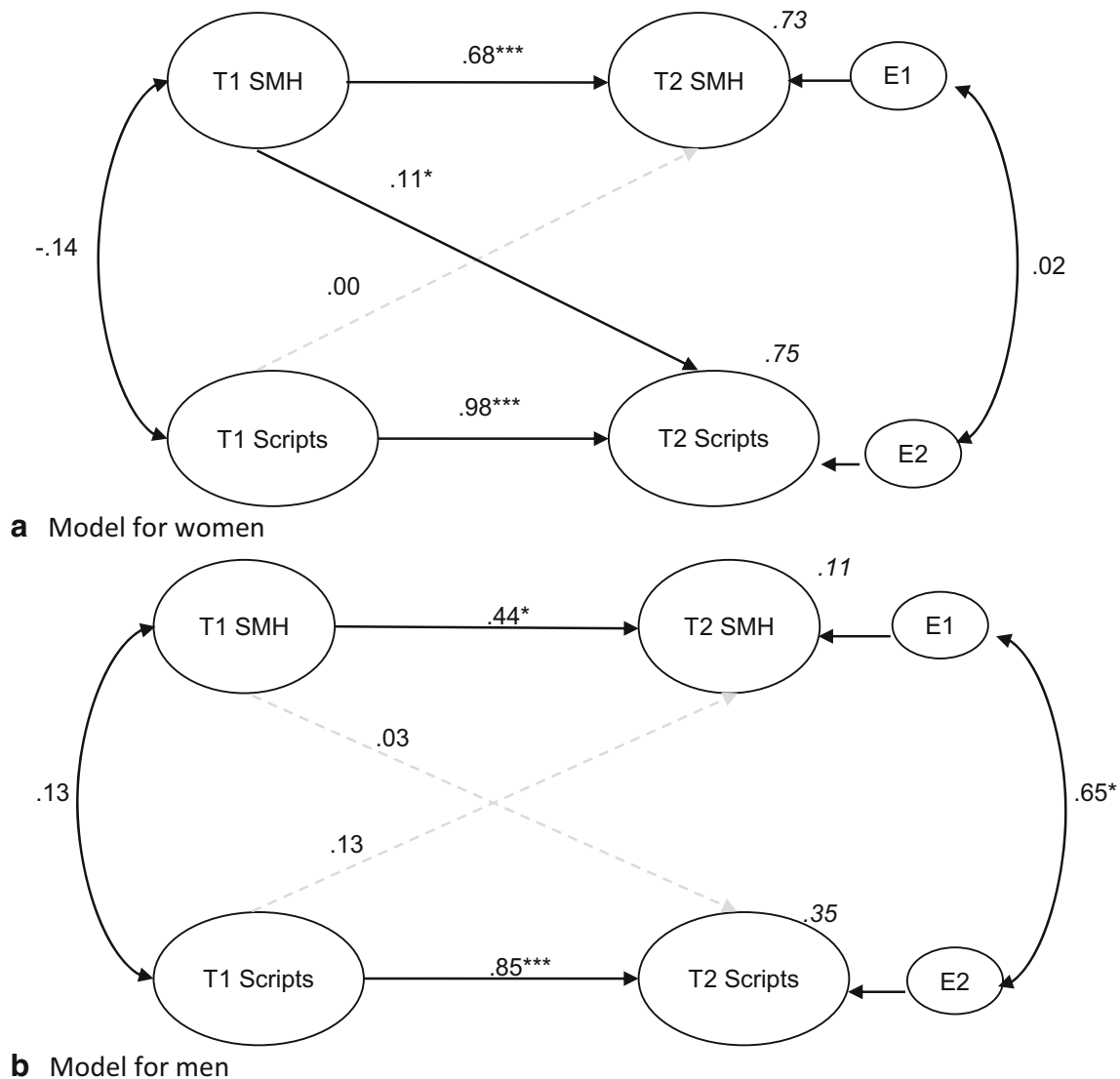
Fig. 1 Results of cross-lagged relationships between sexual media habits (SMH) and endorsement of heteronormative scripts for (**a**) women and (**b**) men. Estimates are standardized. R² estimates are italicized. Dashed lines indicate nonsignificant paths (p ≥ .05). *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001
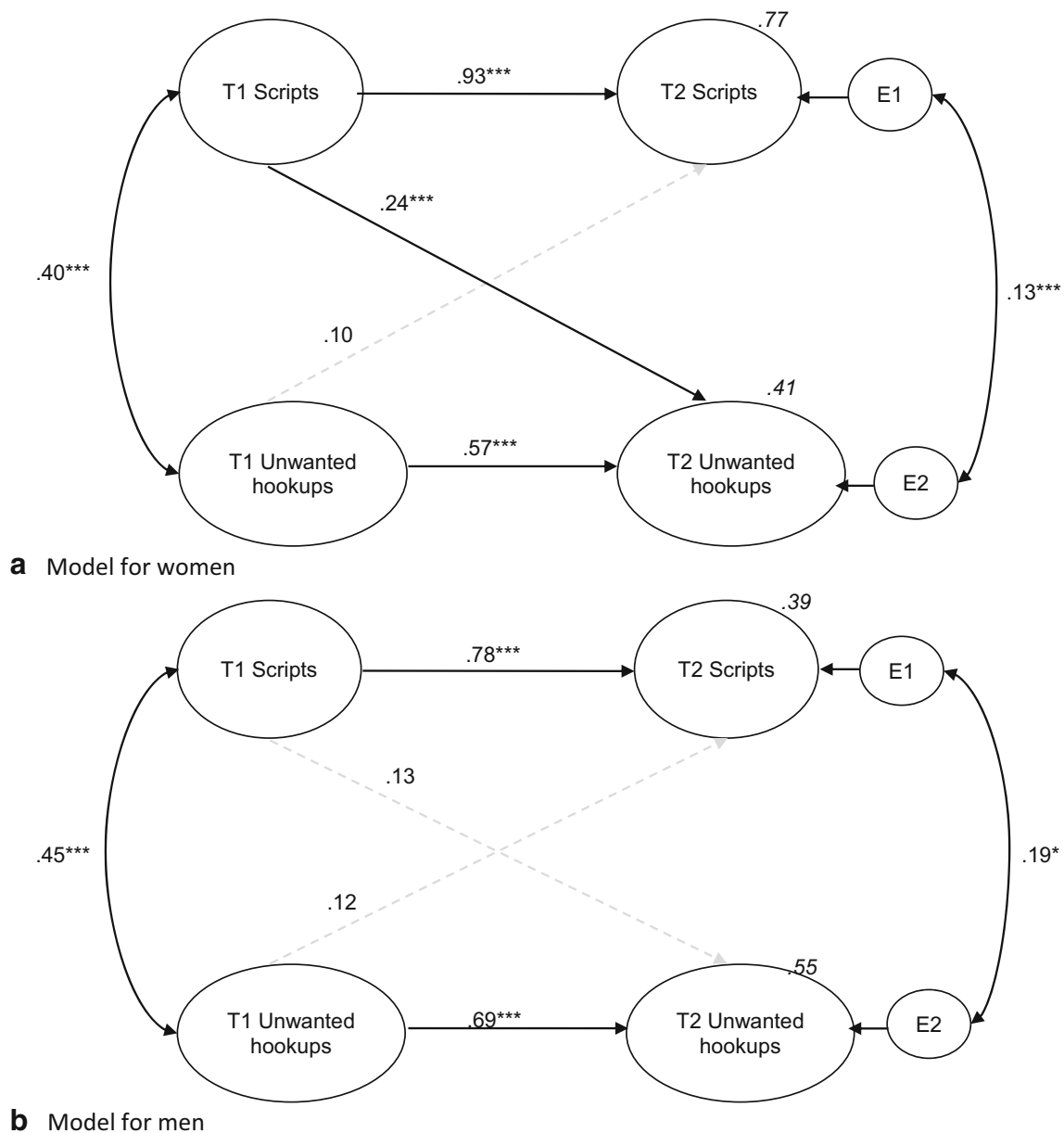
at Time 1 to their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 ($\beta = .02$, $p = .82$) was not significant, but the paths between women's SMH at Time 1 and their endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2 ($\beta = .14$, $p = .01$) and women's endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 and their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 ($\beta = .25$, $p < .001$) were significant. The indirect effect, which was calculated as the product of the a and b paths, was also significant ($\beta = .04$, 95% CI [.01, .05]). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was supported for women.

The mediation model for men had good fit, $\chi^2(149) = 204.77$, $p < .001$ (CMIN/DF = 1.37, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .07, TLI = .95) (see Fig. 3b). None of the paths were significant for men, although this conclusion remains inconclusive because of sample size concerns. In

sum, these results suggest that there may be an indirect relationship between SMH and hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups through endorsement of heteronormative scripts, but only for women.

Discussion

In the present study, college women's sexual media habits (SMH) at Time 1 positively predicted their endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 2. In addition, college women's endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 positively predicted their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2. Cross-lagged correlations showed that these two relationships were unidirectional. Lastly, a half-

Fig. 2 Results of cross-lagged relationships between endorsement of heteronormative scripts and hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups for (**a**) women and (**b**) men. Estimates are standardized. R^2 estimates are italicized. Dashed lines indicate nonsignificant paths ($p \geq .05$). *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$

longitudinal mediation model found an indirect relationship between college women's SMH at Time 1 and their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups through their endorsement of heteronormative scripts. The same tests were not significant for a small sample of men.

Previous studies have primarily looked at the cross-sectional associations between television or magazines and a unidimensional measure of endorsement of traditional heterosexual scripts (e.g., Kahlor and Eastin 2011; Kim and Ward 2004; Seabrook et al. 2016; Ward 2002). Extending the results of previous studies, my study found that college women's SMH at Time 1 positively predicted their endorsement of

heteronormative scripts at Time 2. This result is unique in that multiple forms of media and several aspects of the heteronormative script were assessed and correlated over a 2-month period.

In addition, women's endorsement of heteronormative scripts at Time 1 positively predicted their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2. Although no previous known studies have examined this relationship directly, many have suggested that endorsing traditional heterosexual scripts may result in risky sexual behavior. For example, Paxton et al. (2005) found that women who endorsed more stereotypical gender roles were more likely to behave in ways that

Fig. 3 Half-longitudinal mediation between sexual media habits (SMH), endorsement of heteronormative scripts, and hesitance towards resisting unwanted hookups for (a) women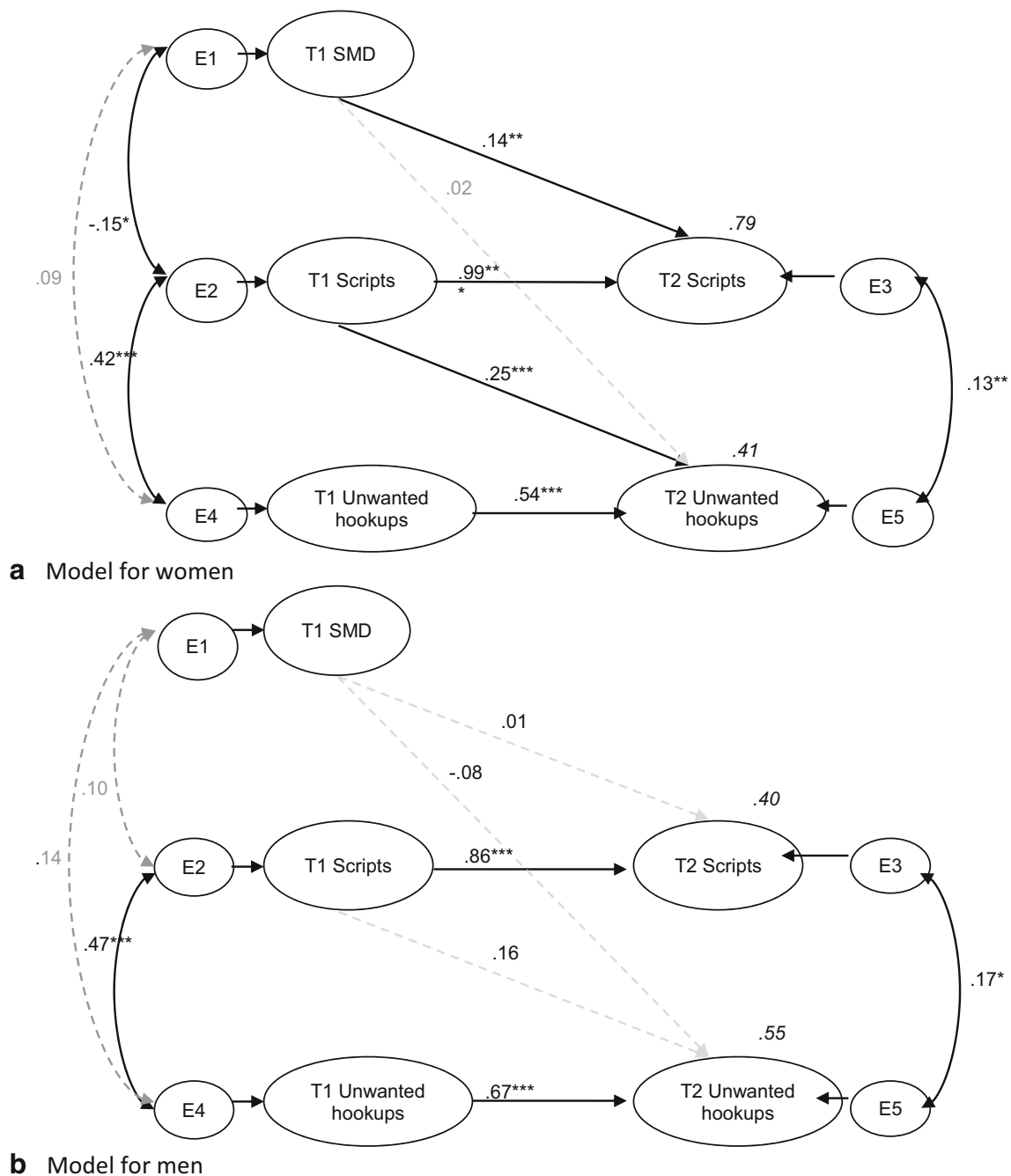 and (b) men. Estimates are standardized. R^2 estimates are italicized. Dashed lines indicate nonsignificant paths (p $\geq$ .05). *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001

conformed to those roles. In addition, Motley and Reeder (1995) found that women who more strongly endorse traditional heterosexual scripts may believe that their male partners will get angry if they resist sex.

Given that the preceding two paths were significant, it was not surprising that the indirect effect between women's SMH at Time 1 and their hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2 through their endorsement of heteronormative scripts

was significant. Although the effect size based on the beta co-efficient was small, the R^2 indicated that the half-longitudinal mediation model explained 40% of the variance in women's hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups at Time 2.

The paths between college men's SMH with both endorse-ment of heteronormative scripts and hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups were not significant, although these find-ings are not conclusive because the sample size for men did

not reach the size needed to obtain sufficient statistical power. Because I used a convenience sample of college students taking classes in the social sciences, the gender distribution in this population resulted in a smaller sample size and less statistical power for men. Thus, small relationships between variables may not have had the statistical power needed to find statistically significant. Still, the nonsignificant relationship between college men's SMH and their endorsement of heteronormative scripts is somewhat consistent with previous research in that the relationship between media use and endorsement of traditional heterosexual scripts is consistently stronger for women than it is for men (Ward 2002; Ward and Rivadeneyra 1999).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The present study had a few limitations. To begin, the amount of time between each of the panel surveys was just 2 months. Furthermore, the correlations among the key variables were strong across both time periods, indicating these variables may be somewhat invariant over time. By having such a short time period between surveys, some of the processes that may take place over longer periods of time may not have been captured or the changes observed could eventually level out over time. Future studies will want to extend the period of time between studies to better understand how the processes studied may change or evolve over time.

Another limitation of the current study was the sample size for men. Although the total sample size met the a priori determined sample size needed for the analyses, there were twice as many women as there were men, which may have biased my findings (T. A. Brown 2015). Because of this difference, I ran the analyses separately for men and for women, but this analytic strategy meant that the models run for men only had 92 participants, which was well under the sample size needed to obtain power for the models for men. Future studies may want to try oversampling men to get more comparable sample sizes between men and women or may recruit from populations with more balanced gender representation.

In addition, due to time and resource limitations, my study was based on a voluntary convenience sample. This decision has limited my results and conclusions in two ways: (a) the results presented can only be safely generalized to mostly White, heterosexual, traditional age, U.S. college students and (b) the findings cannot be compared among groups within demographic categories (e.g., younger participants vs. older participants). Future researchers should attempt to get a more demographically diverse and representational sample, and they might consider purposively sampling enough people to make comparisons among different age, racial/ethnic, or sexuality categories. Also, future researchers could consider qualitative studies that explore the unique perspectives that individuals could offer about how different sources of information played a role in

their endorsement of heteronormative scripts and how they developed a hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups.

Lastly, the associations among the variables in my study were small, and I included no control variables in my design. For these two reasons, I can only conclude that my study found statistically significant associations among U.S. college women's SMH, endorsement of heteronormative scripts, and hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups and that these associations deserve further study. Future studies should attempt to identify what variables may influence one's hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups so that they may measure and control for these alternative predictors.

Despite these limitations, the present study's design, instrumentation, and analyses were innovative. The design of this study sought to go a step further than previous cross-sectional studies by having two rounds of surveys distributed over a 2-month period that included spring break. Future studies should consider collecting longitudinal data, even if it is only over a short period of time or only between two time points. In addition, I used a newly created instrument to measure hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. This measure improves upon previous measures because it can be used to assess whether someone may be *at risk* of engaging in unwanted hookups rather than having to ask about past unwanted sexual experiences. Although hookups were most relevant to the age group I studied, this measure could easily be adapted to assess one's hesitance toward resisting any unwanted sexual behavior. Lastly, few studies have used the half-longitudinal mediation analyses described in Little (2013). Future studies should consider using this type of analysis to study indirect effects that may occur between two time points.

Practice Implications

The results of my study are important because they suggest that U.S. college women's sexual entertainment media (not including pornography) could be partially responsible for their development of heteronormative scripts which could then influence their hesitance to resist unwanted hookups. This issue is important because studies have indicated that college students are at high risk of engaging in unwanted sex, often in the form of hookups (Flack et al. 2007). These unwanted sexual experiences have been associated with several negative effects including, but not limited to, future victimization, unhealthy sexual practices, as well as physical, psychological, and social problems (Lewis et al. 2012; Owen and Fincham 2011). Although sexual entertainment media is likely only a small influence, it is an ever present one. Because unwanted sexual behavior is often discussed primarily in terms of rape and sexual assault, especially in the media (Bufkin and Eschholz 2000), many college students may not be aware of the negative effects seemingly less serious forms of unwanted sex can have on them. Knowing this, practice professionals may want

to incorporate discussions about how the media suggests women should act in sexual situations and how these messages compare to those they have received from other sources when developing resources or considering policy changes aimed at college women.

Those who are responsible for educating young women about their sexuality may be particularly interested in my findings. Sexual media portrays women as sexual objects who are responsible for setting the limits of sexual interaction, but they are encouraged to do so in a passive way (Collins 2011; Stern and Brown 2008; Ward 2003; Wright 2009). By constructing media-conscious sexual education programs, educators could inspire young women to become more critical consumers of sexual entertainment media who refuse to endorse the heteronormative scripts they encounter and who feel assertive enough to boldly resist unwanted sexual interactions.

Conclusion

My study found evidence that college women's sexual media habits can increase their endorsement of heteronormative scripts leading to increased hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookups. This result suggests the female sexual role defined in heteronormative scripts that are frequently portrayed in sexual entertainment media may be associated with college women's hesitance toward resisting unwanted hookup advances. Because media representations of women's sexual role continue to follow damaging traditional sexual norms, it is important that these findings be incorporated into sex education programs that acknowledge the power that media images and messages about sexuality can have on emerging adults' ideas about sex.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

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