BLACKNESS, GIRLHOOD, AND SEXUALIZATION IN THE MEDIA

- **Adultification Bias:** Type of racial prejudice that treats Black children as more mature than they are (Huncar, 2023)

- In the media, Black women are portrayed with exaggerated physical features (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013)

- Black women are stereotyped and objectified in the media (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013)

- There is a double standard when it comes to Black women's confidence

Hyper-Sexualization of Black Women in the Media

- Judged more for expressing their sexuality than white women. (Lamb & Plocha, 2015)

- Affects Black women and girls at all ages

- Black girls bodies are sexualized at younger ages than white peers (Crooks et al., 2023)

- Media portrayals affect people's perceptions of Black girls' behaviour

What Does This Mean For Black Women?

- Self-perceptions can be altered based on harmful stereotypes (Davis, 2017)

- Insecurities around body and sexual behaviour

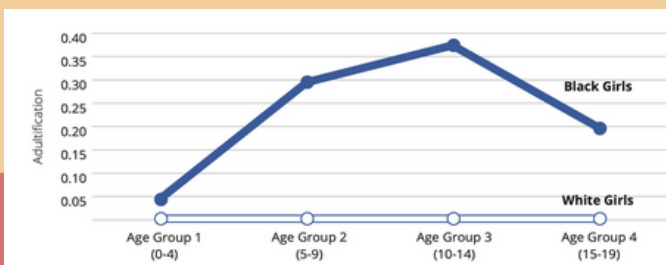- Potential adherence to stereotyped roles despite personal morals and desires

- Sexual health is at risk due to lack of protection and care (Crooks et al., 2023)

- At a higher risk of sexual violence

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Statistics

- 40-60% of black women report being subjected to coercive sexual contact by age 18. (Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault, n.d)

- Moderate and high levels of SBW (Strong Black Woman) endorsement increased the relationship between stress and depressive symptoms. (CITE)

- Black girls are viewed as more adult than their white peers at all stages of childhood (Georgetown University, 2017)

Historical Context

- Rooted in the history of slavery and oppression.

- exploitation by slave owners during the slave trade

- Sexualization of Black women as a means to justify rape and continue slavery

- Hyper-sexualization is a result of years of misogyny and oppression that continues to this day,

(Blackburn Centre, 2019; Teshome & Yang, 2018)

Adultification chart: y-axis labeled "Adultification" (0.05 to 0.40), x-axis "Age Group 1 (0-4), Age Group 2 (5-9), Age Group 3 (10-14), Age Group 4 (15-19)". Lines labeled "Black Girls" and "White Girls".

For Bullying/Harassment — White Girls, Black Girls (3x), White Boys, Black Boys (1.5x)

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What Can We Do?

- **Listen to and empathize with Black girls and women's experiences**

- Practice self reflection and work challenging your own biases you may be unaware of

- Educate yourself, do research and reach out to other sources

- Calling for changes in media production to portray Black women and include Black women the way they deserve.

- Advocating for Black girls by fighting hyper-sexualization

How are Black Women Reconceptualizing Their Place in Media?

- Challenging narratives by expressing their beliefs and truths on social media.

- advocate for themselves and the Black community.

- Create safe spaces in the media for other young Black girls

- Encouraging Black girls to speak up on the issue of their representation in the media

(McPherson, 2019)

Empowered Women Empower Women

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