

## **“Fifty Shades” and reported sexual consent: a study with female college students**

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**Rationale/Background:** Sexual consent is a key concept to the understanding of the dynamics behind interpersonal relationships, particularly those that may involve episodes of sexual violence and victimization.

**Research Questions:** In the current study, we aimed at understanding whether the exposure to Fifty Shades film and reading work – a contemporary cultural product portraying sexual consent related issues -, as well as the satisfaction associated with the reading and visual exposure, had effects on women’s sexual consent.

**Methods:** Five hundred and thirty-six female college students, aged between 18-25 years, were enrolled in a cross-sectional on-line survey assessing visual and reading exposure to Fifty Shades, levels of satisfaction with such exposure, and sexual consent (i.e., internal and external cues denoting sexual consent), as measured by the Internal and External Sexual Consent Scales. Two-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (two-way MANOVA) were conducted to evaluate the effects of visual exposure (yes vs no) and the reading of the 50 Shades of Grey (yes vs no) on the sexual consent scales. Pearson correlations analyses were used to obtain the relationship between the satisfaction with the movie/reading and students’ sexual consent.

**Results:** Findings revealed that the reading exposure had effects on women’s internal feelings of sexual consent (i.e., women who read FS reported to feel less secure, aroused, and ready for sex, among other cues), while the satisfaction associated with the reading work was related to less cues of external sexual consent (i.e., increased satisfaction with FS written work was related to fewer physical responses to sex, less direct/non-verbal behaviors, and less communication).

**Conclusions:** Although data have suggested a relationship between the exposure to 50 Shades and women’s sexual consent, findings preclude definitive assumptions regarding such relationship given the low effects sizes and the transversal nature of the current design.

**Key Words:** Sexual consent, 50 Shades, Women’s sexual behavior, Gender roles.

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