

Sluts, studs and double standards



How does gender affect discrimination and slut shaming culture in modern society?

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Introduction

How many times have you seen a man being called a slut, a bop, or a disappointment to their parents for simply posting a photo of themselves at the beach online? Most people haven't. But on a woman's post, one of the top comments is a man commenting on their clothes, actions or body. Slut shaming isn't just an insult; it is a normalised misogynist weapon used to degrade women.

This topic explores slut shaming culture in modern society and how discrimination differentiates between men and women, aiming to explore how gender norms, social expectations, the media, specifically social media and traditional power dynamics in relationships impact slut shaming. Slut shaming is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as "the action or fact of stigmatising a woman for engaging in behaviour judged to be promiscuous or sexually provocative". Based on the Oxford definition, naming women as the victims of slut shaming supports the hypothesis that women are more susceptible to slut shaming within society. Also acknowledging that while women are more subjected to sexual and appearance-based shaming, men are more likely to be judged for their inability to satisfy traditional masculinity ideals. Investigating this issue enables a critical examination of how gender affects the presence of shaming an individual will receive in society, leading to social exclusion as a result of not aligning with gender norms and social expectations.

This topic is important due to the high volume of shaming observed online and in meso interactions. Becoming more aware of the severity of slut shaming will help people to realise how their words are contributing to an ongoing issue of the commodification and degradation of women.

Continuity and change help to examine how shaming changes between males and females, how shaming is both online and in person and where it is most present in modern society. The presence of shaming results in social exclusion and negatively impacts one's life chances. The continuity of traditional power dynamics, social norms and norms helps to investigate the ongoing nature of slut shaming and how these concepts contribute to shaming culture in modern society.

Research findings from the primary questionnaire indicate that social media has played a pivotal role in amplifying sexual cyberbullying. Over the past decades, the rise of digital platforms such as TikTok and Instagram has allowed for wider opportunities for online harassment to take place, as well as to spread rumours rapidly. The questionnaire results

suggest that traditional patriarchal expectations persist, where women are often expected to appear pure yet not inexperienced, while men are more frequently encouraged or praised for engaging in sexual behaviour, which helps them be socially included as they align with masculine ideals.

This research aims to investigate how women and men are affected by slut shaming and how we as a society degrade each gender, and if methods continue across gender or change. The examination of primary and secondary research, both genders are affected by social norms, gender expectations and slut shaming to an extent, and explores why this is a prevalent issue that society needs to take seriously.

Log

I had an interest in the impact of slut shaming because, as a woman in society, the most offensive yet common insult is being called a slut or a whore. As a result of continuing inequality between genders and recent domestic violence campaigns, it is socially and culturally relevant as slut shaming demotes women to patriarchal stereotypes and values, which enables making women inferior. There is a lot of information about what slut shaming is and why it is bad; however, there are limited resources or ideas about why it is as common as it is and how it is a weapon to women's sexual autonomy. Severe mental and social health consequences as a result of shaming are more common than society is currently aware of because meso and macro institutions are yet to recognise the normality of slut shaming and why it is such a large-scale problem in modern society.

I had to readjust my question due to the massive amount of information online that allowed me to learn that the media is a continuing and growing driver of slut shaming, which helped me understand the inevitability of being shamed.

My experience of being slut shamed and dismissed by peers and authority figures motivated me to investigate why society normalises this behaviour. This, as well as males not being a victim of slut shaming or taking it as a compliment to their masculinity, my personal experience has led me to my hypothesis of "Women are significantly more exposed to slut shaming because of embedded patriarchal values".

Once I commenced research on my area of study, I was surprised by the massive amount of articles, websites, documentaries and case studies at hand. I read through lots of sources to find 3 main areas of interest that helped me to prove or challenge my hypothesis. I faced some personal distress reading through disturbing and tragic cases, but I used that distress to fuel my passion for my topic. After countless hours of research and reading, I found 3 areas that were of the best help for my question: What are the psychological effects of slut shaming culture, how do societal expectations around sexuality change between males and females, and how has the media impacted slut shaming culture?

Through my secondary research, I developed a social awareness and understanding of the most efficient methodologies. I decided on a questionnaire, personal reflection and interviews, which gave both qualitative and quantitative results concerning my hypothesis. I chose a questionnaire to allow for efficient answers regarding my PIP question, allowing for my question to be broken down and answered in smaller parts. This proved successful as

statistics were notable and aligned with my hypothesis, but still posed some challenges, which boosted my interest.

I interviewed Generation X meso-level authority figures and Generation Z peers to explore continuity and change in attitudes toward slut shaming, as well as perspectives surrounding the causes and effects of slut shaming across genders, ages and social positions.

My reflection allowed me to show my engagement with the topic and to provide first-hand micro experiences, which proved extremely critical when analysing the presence of slut shaming.

However, it is impossible to discuss my PIP journey without referring to the obstacles and barriers I faced along the way. The responses for my questionnaire were slow starting, and some answers were too brief to gain depth. To combat this limitation, I emailed a wider community with my questionnaire and ended up with 50+ responses that had depth, and each had unique insight. Due to being a major work completed at school, my sample size may be skewed, with the majority of responses coming from my meso communities instead of the wider demographic of Sydney.

Overall, my PIP was a highly valuable experience that greatly benefited my research skills and my self-determination. Throughout this process, I have become more socially and culturally literate, which has been the most satisfying part of my schooling experience.

Chapter 1: What are the psychological effects of slut shaming culture?

This chapter investigates the psychological impact of slut shaming and how power dynamics are reinforced through both micro and meso-level interactions. Slut shaming not only generates feelings of humiliation but also perpetuates harmful power imbalances that reflect broader patriarchal structures. Slut shaming can be experienced in 6 key forms: casual remarks (for example, you look like a bimbo in that skirt), behind-the-back comments, online harassment, face-to-face confrontation, arguments with significant others and visible images or words in public spaces¹. Primary research reinforces how normalised slut shaming is and the extent of the humiliation and internalised self-hatred that is now common in the modern generation.²

The prevalence of these forms of shaming reveals how traditional gender norms continue to influence both the way individuals express authority and how shame is socially distributed. Despite progress toward gender equality, these persistent dynamics reinforce the perception that women are subject to greater moral scrutiny, contributing to ongoing social exclusion and psychological distress through rumours, bullying and social humiliation, which negatively impact life chances due to an increase in emotional instability.

The questionnaire responses reveal that slut-shaming is mostly commonly expressed through casual, indirect and online behaviours, reflecting how normalised and hidden this form of discrimination has become in both social and digital settings. The questionnaire results of 50-plus participants showed that the top 3 forms of shaming are 22.9% of people are slut shamed through casual remarks, 18.8% through behind someone's back and 16.7% online. These results show that slut shaming is often used in a joking or discreet way to mask the offensive nature of their comments. The high frequency of online shaming presents the vital role of digital spaces as common platforms for judgement and shaming, offenders often hiding behind screens and using dissociative anonymity to create space between themselves and their words, leading to a reduced sense of responsibility.³ These

¹ L. Antonatos. "Slut Shaming: What It Is, Examples, & Effects." *Choosing Therapy*, 16 Aug. 2022, www.choosingtherapy.com/slut-shaming/. Accessed 12 May 2025.

² Primary research: questionnaire

³ Primary research: questionnaire

findings show that slut shaming is invasive and isn't exclusive to online or real-life situations, but is a continuing issue across both digital and physical spaces, showing its ability to thrive in all contexts. It indicates that slut shaming frequently manifests in understated and socially accepted forms, which can mask the weight the shaming has.

There is a social divide between those who view slut shaming as harmful and those who do not, revealing a border tension between public perception and the psychological realities faced by victims. Results of the questionnaire further revealed that 56.9% of respondents recognised slut shaming as harmful, while 39.2% thought it wasn't harmful, suggesting a social divide that exposes a tension between academic consensus and individual beliefs. Some of the psychological impacts that participants discussed are broken down into three subgroups: Emotional harm, which includes shame, humiliation and objectification. Some answers were "i felt dirty, "reduced to my body", Self esteem and identity: internalised stigma. Some answers were "it harmed my self esteem", "it made me doubt myself" and Coping mechanisms: some repressed feelings "acted like it didn't bother me" while others used it as empowerment "slay, i am a slut."

These findings suggest the complexity of slut shaming's impact on lasting psychological impacts can differ from person to person, which is not uniformly experienced. The divide between whether it is offensive or not cements the thinking that slut shaming and sexual cyberbullying are not recognised as a serious form of bullying or harassment.⁴ The diverse psychological effects range from shame and self-doubt to empowerment, highlighting how slut shaming can heavily distort self-perception, damage identity development, particularly in young people. This variance depicts the normalisation of emotional abuse and weakens collective recognition of slut shaming as a serious form of psychological violence.

The psychological toll of slut shaming and sexual cyberbullying is evident in high-profile cases such as Rehtaeh Parsons, as documented in Gillian Angrove's article, "She's such a slut! The over sexualised cyberbullying of teen girls and the

⁴ Primary research: questionnaire

education law response”⁵ and the documentary by Rama Rau “No place to hide.”⁶ Parsons' experience as a teenage girl highlights how slut shaming can escalate into tragic and devastating psychological consequences, including depression, panic attacks and social exclusion. Parson's case underscores how meso institutions, particularly schools and law enforcement, have failed to intervene adequately and help when young women are subjected to gendered harassment. Despite knowing about the abuse and access to evidence, these institutions exercised their authority in ways that protected the male perpetrators rather than the victims. This reflects the continuity of traditional power dynamics where female voices are doubted or dismissed, especially in instances involving sexual assault and sexual cyberbullying. The lack of institutional responses reinforced Parsons' social exclusion, illustrating how slut shaming not only operates at the micro level through peer interactions but is also enabled by meso and macro level failures in safeguarding and accountability. This case supports the chapter's broader argument that slut shaming is not only a cultural phenomenon, but a systematic issue sustained by structural inaction and patriarchal norms.⁷

Upon personal reflection, I was subjected to slut shaming, which resulted in low self-esteem and anxiety “I felt trapped”. These remarks resulted in low self-esteem and anxiety in social events due to a fear of judgment based on what people might have heard about me. My social health suffered as I lost friends and was socially excluded from previous social circles. This also exposed the pressure women feel to say yes to avoid social consequences if they were to say no, highlighting the continuing pattern of men holding social dominance and power.⁸

Furthermore, the implications of slut shaming became apparent in interview responses from a Year 12 leadership team and wellbeing staff. The students discussed that girls faced “body shaming, negative self-talk and social isolation” as a

⁵G, Angrove . “CHAPTER XII “She’s Such a Slut!”: The Sexualized Cyberbullying of Teen Girls and the Education Law Response the Sexualized Cyberbullying of Teen Girls and the Education Law Response from EGirls, ECitizens: Putting Technology, Theory and Policy into Dialogue with Girls’ and Young Women’s Voices on JSTOR.” Jstor.org, 2024, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15nmj7f.16?searchText=cyberbullying&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dcyberbullying%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A94a3956ed006fc0e0193ce54c6962513&seq=1

⁶ R,Rau, . “Prime Video: No Place to Hide.” Primevideo.com, 2025, www.primevideo.com/region/fe/detail/0JXL30GSBHNK8MCHB3DGX31ESU/ref=atv_sr_file_c_Tn74RA_1_1_1?sr=1-1&pageTypepeldSource=ASIN&pageTypepeld=B0CPGQTR6J&qid=1745729259183. Accessed 12 May 2025.

⁷ R,Rua, . “Prime Video: No Place to Hide.” Primevideo.com, 2025, www.primevideo.com/region/fe/detail/0JXL30GSBHNK8MCHB3DGX31ESU/ref=atv_sr_file_c_Tn74RA_1_1_1?sr=1-1&pageTypepeldSource=ASIN&pageTypepeld=B0CPGQTR6J&qid=1745729259183. Accessed 12 May 2025.

⁸ Primary research: personal reflection

result of slut shaming, and this can lead to “internalisation of labels like ‘slut’ can lead to low self-esteem and anxiety.” The students also discussed the other thinking process when “having an online presence that can be so easily judged and used against an individual”, which can result in sexual cyberbullying. Both teachers interviewed noted that the mental effects “amplify negative self-talk in young people and make internal voices of criticism louder, feeding self-doubt and reducing confidence and comfort in themselves”. It can also affect them socially and lead to social exclusion.⁹ Interview responses from students and staff responses from students and staff reveal that slut shaming fosters internalised stigma, anxiety and social exclusion, with both groups emphasising how it amplifies negative self-talk and erodes young people’s self-worth in both online and offline spaces. This qualitative data shows that slut shaming primarily affects young women through the internalisation of body shaming and negative self-talk as a common result of slutshaming on the micro level, but the internalisation of derogatory labels (for example slut) adds to the reversal of equality and not using degrading terms. The results also reinforce the hypothesis that slut shaming is a gendered mechanism of social control, negatively oppressing females’ sexual behaviour by using humiliation and guilt, which are continued from patriarchal norms and power dynamics of a pure woman.

In conclusion, slut shaming operates as a powerful tool of gendered social control, reinforcing patriarchal dominance and restricting female sexual autonomy, while it manifests in both subtle and overt forms, its psychological and social consequences are profound. Despite broader conversations about gender equality, societal and institutional responses often fail to adequately address the harm, allowing these power imbalances to persist. To create meaningful change, education systems, digital platforms, and cultural narratives must confront these harmful norms and promote respect, agency, and gender equity.

⁹ Primary research: interview

Chapter 2: How do societal expectations around sexuality change between males and females?

This chapter explores the changing and continuing aspects of how power dynamics transcend through time and whether they are influenced by social norms around sexual behaviour for men and women.¹⁰ A key area of interest is how we as a society delegate power in micro situations for personal relationships and why we feel the need to obey these very traditional patriarchal expectations. Observations in daily micro and meso interactions suggest that men hold more power in social settings, especially in conversations or disagreements. This power comes from both authority positions and lack of authority positions and is fueled by traditional power dynamics of men holding superiority.¹¹ These imbalances reinforced the notion that women are still perceived as inferior to men despite broader social progress toward gender equality.¹² The cross-cultural focus on gender helps investigate the differences between men and women in social exclusion and why, typically, it has been women suffering the consequences, including psychological distress and social exclusion.

The male superiority is evident throughout interviews with high school student leadership, male and female and wellbeing and leadership staff. The interview supported the notion that men seem to have superiority when it comes to sexual behaviour¹³. The high school students highlighted that if a male were to have multiple sexual partners, he is celebrated as a “player”¹⁴ whereas females are derogatorily labelled as “sluts”¹⁵ or “whores”¹⁶, demonstrating the enduring nature of men being

¹⁰“Gender studies, Understanding Power Dynamics in Gender Relations» Gender Studies.” Gender Studies, Feb. 2024, <http://gender.study/issues-of-gender-and-development/power-dynamics-gender-relations/> Accessed 1 June 2025.

¹¹“Gender studies, Understanding Power Dynamics in Gender Relations» Gender Studies.” Gender Studies, Feb. 2024, <http://gender.study/issues-of-gender-and-development/power-dynamics-gender-relations/> Accessed 1 June 2025.

¹²J,Endendijk. “He Is a Stud, She Is a Slut! A Meta-Analysis on the Continued Existence of Sexual Double Standards.” *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol. 24, no. 2, 27 Dec. 2019, pp. 163–190, [journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1088868319891310](https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868319891310), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868319891310> Accessed 1 June 2025.

¹³ Primary research: interview

¹⁴ Primary research: interview

¹⁵ Primary research: interview

¹⁶ Primary research: interview

praised for things women are shamed for¹⁷. The staff noted that traditional values of purity and virginity still exist for women, while men pursuing various sexual partners is encouraged and a sign of masculinity.¹⁸¹⁹ The male staff teacher described how “body count” is celebrated among males but is shamed among females²⁰, cementing ideals that women should be pure while men have the freedom to explore and pursue sexual doors²¹, revealing how the ongoing gender disparities relate to social norms around sexuality. Generation Z students also explored the notion that girls are trapped in lose-lose situations where they face criticism for being sexually active or for not being sexually active,²² where they are called “a prude”²³, highlighting an argument of women trying to fit into impossible and forever-changing expectations. The staff acknowledge that the media reinforces traditional stereotypes of the emotionally vulnerable women, using her sexuality to project her emotions, whilst in contrast, men’s sexual pursuits are physical and conquest-based, which can lead to untrue and parochial beliefs among young people who believe they need to be overly emotional or not at all.²⁴ Depending on the traditional expectations, both students and teacher interviews state that girls suffer greater social and mental health consequences following shaming.²⁵ This can lead to low self-esteem, social exclusion, anxiety or depression, whereas boys are comparatively shielded from long-term social and mental health impacts due to them being shamed less than women.

¹⁷ J, Endendijk. “He Is a Stud, She Is a Slut! A Meta-Analysis on the Continued Existence of Sexual Double Standards.” *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol. 24, no. 2, 27 Dec. 2019, pp. 163–190, journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1088868319891310, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868319891310> Accessed 1 June 2025.

¹⁸ Primary research: interview

¹⁹ Gender studies “Understanding Power Dynamics in Gender Relations» *Gender Studies*.” *Gender Studies*, Feb. 2024, <https://gender.study/issues-of-gender-and-development/power-dynamics-gender-relations/> Accessed 1 June 2025.

²⁰ J, Endendijk. “He Is a Stud, She Is a Slut! A Meta-Analysis on the Continued Existence of Sexual Double Standards.” *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol. 24, no. 2, 27 Dec. 2019, pp. 163–190, journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1088868319891310, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868319891310> Accessed 1 June 2025.

²¹ Primary research: interview

²² J, Endendijk. “He Is a Stud, She Is a Slut! A Meta-Analysis on the Continued Existence of Sexual Double Standards.” *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol. 24, no. 2, 27 Dec. 2019, pp. 163–190, journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1088868319891310, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868319891310> Accessed 1 June 2025.

²³ Primary research: interview

²⁴ Primary research: interview

²⁵ R, Stewart. “Gendered Stereotypes and Norms: A Systematic Review of Interventions Designed to Shift Attitudes and Behaviour.” *Heliyon*, vol. 7, no. 4, Apr. 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e06660>.

The staff admitted that shaming was once considered “normal school wear and tear” that they now believe society and meso institutions such as school are recognising the extremely negative outcomes of shaming, by implementing seminars or education that promote gender equality and emotional awareness among students meso institutions aim to decrease the presence of shaming in school communities to build a safer place.²⁶

Despite social progress, gendered double standards remain entrenched in attitudes toward sexuality, as revealed by interview and questionnaire responses. The qualitative data collected from the interviews reveal that although some changes have been made to how men and women are expected to act in sexual relationships, resulting in some more freedom, men still have more freedom to explore their sexuality, while women are shamed for similar behaviour that men follow.²⁷ The primary questionnaire²⁸ provided quantitative and basic qualitative data surrounding the differences in how males and females are expected to participate in a sexual relationship. The data showed that 62.7% of participants said males were encouraged to participate, and a further 39.2% said males were praised for their sexual behaviour.²⁹ In contrast, 51% of participants said females are not encouraged, and over 50% are actively shamed³⁰. Very few participants (5.9%) think females are praised for their sexual behaviour, and 27.5% said females were encouraged.³¹ These results show the strong gender bias of men being encouraged and praised for the same or similar activities as women.³² This reinforces traditional patriarchal gender norms where a woman is valued for her purity and men have the freedom to explore sexual opportunities³³.

²⁶ Primary research: interview

²⁷ Primary research: interview

²⁸ Primary research: interview

²⁹ Primary research: questionnaire

³⁰ Primary research: questionnaire

³¹ Primary research: questionnaire

³² J, Endendijk. “He Is a Stud, She Is a Slut! A Meta-Analysis on the Continued Existence of Sexual Double Standards.” *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol. 24, no. 2, 27 Dec. 2019, pp. 163–190, journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1088868319891310, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868319891310> Accessed 1 June 2025.

³³ L, Heise. “Gender Inequality and Restrictive Gender Norms: Framing the Challenges to Health.” *The Lancet*, vol. 393, no. 10189, June 2019, pp. 2440–2454, [www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)30652-X/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)30652-X/abstract), [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(19\)30652-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(19)30652-x). Accessed 1 June 2025.

Personal reflection³⁴ explores how social norms surrounding sexual behaviour are much harsher for women and have much larger social consequences than there is for males. The personal reflection reads “knowing I had every right to say no to him, yet it felt illegal says a lot about the “improved” sexist social norms where women are expected to be submissive³⁵”, exposing how women are continually to blame for using their right of free speech and this is further exposed as the personal reflection reads “In a world where free speech is a human right, it certainly feels that right is situational for women.”³⁶ While today women have legal and improved autonomy than decades prior, “Women are allowed to do most things men do, but they get judged for it.” My personal reflection³⁷ also explores male sexual entitlement originating from patriarchal power dynamics.³⁸ The unequal treatment directly reflects the deeply rooted gender bias and gender norms that sustain slut shaming culture and contribute to ongoing discrimination against women.³⁹ From my experience, I suffered “extreme anxiety, panic attacks and low self-esteem”, which further proves that societal expectations for female sexual behaviour have lasting mental health consequences due to the impossibility of living up to the expectations. My reflection illustrates how societal norms around sexuality disproportionately shame women, reinforcing double standards that allow male sexual freedom while punishing female autonomy. This internalised stigma, public rumour spreading and resulting mental health impacts reveal the enduring power of patriarchal expectations and the emotional toll they inflict on women.

Both academic and media-based studies support the notion that gender inequality persists in sexual socialisation. Academic articles “Gender inequality and restrictive gender norms: Framing the challenges to mental health” by The Lancet⁴⁰ and

³⁴ Primary research: personal reflection

³⁵ Primary research: personal reflection

³⁶ Primary research: personal reflection

³⁷ Primary research: personal reflection

³⁸ Gender studies, Understanding Power Dynamics in Gender Relations» Gender Studies.” Gender Studies, Feb. 2024,

<http://gender.study/issues-of-gender-and-development/power-dynamics-gender-relations/>

Accessed 1 June 2025.

³⁹ Gender studies, Understanding Power Dynamics in Gender Relations» Gender Studies.” Gender Studies, Feb. 2024,

<http://gender.study/issues-of-gender-and-development/power-dynamics-gender-relations/>

Accessed 1 June 2025.

⁴⁰Lori, Heise. “Gender Inequality and Restrictive Gender Norms: Framing the Challenges to Health.” The Lancet, vol. 393, no. 10189, June 2019, pp. 2440–2454,

“Sexual double standards: Contributions of sexual socialisation by parents, peers and the media” by EBSCO’s editorial team⁴¹ discuss how societal expectations around sexuality are gendered with men often granted more freedom and women subject to stricter scrutiny. The Lancet explores the gender restrictive norms and how these norms are deeply embedded in societal structures, including how people in society operate and view sexual behaviours from each gender. This article argues that the hierarchy and social system favour masculinity over femininity, therefore resulting in social pressures for each gender, which can result in mental and social health consequences.⁴²EBSCO’s article examines how adolescents engage, develop and interact with the sexual double standard and how this is often done through peer socialisation, media and micro interactions with family institutions. ⁴³ Both articles align with my hypothesis that a double standard exists that perpetuates a patriarchal power dynamic in social interactions regarding sexual behaviour. Both articles discuss a stricter consequence and harsher expectations for women in society compared to males, who have much more freedom relating to their sexual behaviour.

In conclusion, cultural expectations of sexuality remain deeply gendered, with men praised for sexual exploration while women are shamed and socially excluded for identical behaviour. Despite progress towards gender equality, patriarchal standards continue to support male superiority and female purity, causing long-term mental health issues for women. Addressing these double standards necessitates structural change in education, media representation, and cultural attitudes to build a more egalitarian society.

[www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)30652-X/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)30652-X/abstract),
[https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(19\)30652-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(19)30652-x). Accessed 1 June 2025.

⁴¹EBSCO, “Slut-Shaming | EBSCO.” EBSCO Information Services, Inc. | [Www.ebsco.com](http://www.ebsco.com), 2025, www.ebsco.com/research-starters/womens-studies-and-feminism/slut-shaming. Accessed 3 June 2025.

⁴² L,Heise. “Gender Inequality and Restrictive Gender Norms: Framing the Challenges to Health.” The Lancet, vol. 393, no. 10189, June 2019, pp. 2440–2454, [www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)30652-X/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)30652-X/abstract), [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(19\)30652-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(19)30652-x). Accessed 1 June 2025.

⁴³ EBSCO, “Slut-Shaming | EBSCO.” EBSCO Information Services, Inc. | [Www.ebsco.com](http://www.ebsco.com), 2025, www.ebsco.com/research-starters/womens-studies-and-feminism/slut-shaming. Accessed 3 June 2025.

Chapter 3: How has the media impacted slut shaming culture?

Media's growing presence in everyday lives has led to sexual cyberbullying being justified, normalised, and the exposure of slut shaming significantly increasing. Sexual cyberbullying is online bullying that attacks someone's sexual character. Sexual character is a person's actual sexual acts or their perceived sexual behaviour. The phenomenon of sexual cyberbullying makes teenagers and the youth demographic vulnerable in the growing world of technology, as it is unique in that it can reach victims at any time or place ⁴⁴. Media creates a wider platform for the sexual double standard to be spread and embedded through dichotomies such as the good girl vs bad girl, as well as the glorification of male sexual behaviours. Media amplifies slut-shaming through public exposure and online harassment.

Sexual cyberbullying allows the reinforcement of sexual double standards and gender norms, as it allows perpetrators to have the freedom to slut shame someone anytime, any place. Questionnaire results reveal that approximately 35% of people have been slut shamed online, which reflects the common nature of slut shaming online⁴⁵. Social media has been called an enabler of slut shaming, where "cowards are given a platform" so they can anonymously exist in the digital space and avoid consequences⁴⁶. Due to social media's ability to follow somebody online and in person, no matter where they are, it creates a loss of safe spaces, as a questionnaire participant said, "it follows you home", which is unlike traditional bullying, as it feels inescapable⁴⁷. Social media enables a wider and faster spread of rumours, insults and slutshaming, which negatively impacts society by eliminating safe places for victims and accelerating the presence of sexual cyberbullying in society. The sexual double standard is amplified through social media, and more detrimental for girls, as they know "one wrong move online can define them," discussed in Tim Birkhead's article on promiscuity ⁴⁸. Birkhead discusses how social media makes slut shaming more accessible and develops the sexual double

⁴⁴C,Clark. "Sexual Cyberbullying - What You Need to Know | Alabama Campaign for Adolescent Sexual Health." Alabama Campaign for Adolescent Sexual Health, 23 Sept. 2024, alabamacampaign.org/sexual-cyberbullying-what-you-need-to-know/. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁴⁵ Primary research: questionnaire

⁴⁶ Primary research: questionnaire

⁴⁷ Primary research: questionnaire

⁴⁸T, Birkhead. "Promiscuity." *Daedalus*, vol. 136, no. 2, 2007, pp. 13–22. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20028106, <https://doi.org/10.2307/20028106>. Accessed 5 June 2025.

standard between males and females, which is much harsher on females⁴⁹. Birkhead's article also explores the glorification of male promiscuity and how social media celebrates that while it critiques women. Through his investigation, he explains how "boys post shirtless selfies and are flooded with praise. Girls do the same and get torn apart", revealing the clear digital double standard of female scrutiny. Further, he explains, "She curates every post, every caption, every emoji - because she knows the stakes", which highlights the intense pressures placed on girls to police and censor their online presence to avoid sexual cyberbullying or judgment. Birkhead continues to say, "social media doesn't just mirror this culture - it magnifies it", which illuminates how social media doesn't reflect modern, real-world values but intensifies gender based shaming and helps to justify the sexual double standard as well as sexual cyberbullying⁵⁰. This negatively impacts society as it sets back previous feminist waves and social movements for equality by unjustly judging female sexual behaviour as well as manipulating online actions to create a hidden sexual meaning to damage a female's character. Through stereotypes and dichotomies such as the good girl vs bad girl trope in movies and in society, the growing impact media has on sexual cyberbullying has become more evident. Emily M. Boyd's article explores the judgment of women and characterisation as "good" if they are pure, moral and sexually cautious or as "bad" if they are promiscuous, reckless and morally flawed. Boyd investigates this good girl vs bad girl dichotomy and how it influences how society treats women and how it could impact their identity, especially those who contract STDs.⁵¹ Boyd discusses how STD's lead to public punishment where women face humiliation as she says "Stigmatised women often became isolated from social networks and were subject to judgment, exclusion and devaluation" reflecting the weaponisation of female sexuality through sexual cyberbullying⁵². This also depicts the continuity in gender norms and highlights the

⁴⁹T,Birkhead. "Promiscuity." *Daedalus*, vol. 136, no. 2, 2007, pp. 13–22. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20028106, <https://doi.org/10.2307/20028106>. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁵⁰TBirkhead. "Promiscuity." *Daedalus*, vol. 136, no. 2, 2007, pp. 13–22. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20028106, <https://doi.org/10.2307/20028106>. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁵¹E,Boyd. "The Good Girl—Bad Girl Dichotomy: Sexual Double Standards, STDs, and Stigma Management Damaged Goods? Women Living with Incurable Sexually Transmitted Diseases. By Adina Nack . Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008. \$19.75 (Paper); \$64.50 (Cloth)." *Symbolic Interaction*, vol. 33, no. 2, May 2010, pp. 333–336, <https://doi.org/10.1525/si.2010.33.2.333>. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁵²E,Boyd. "The Good Girl—Bad Girl Dichotomy: Sexual Double Standards, STDs, and Stigma Management Damaged Goods? Women Living with Incurable Sexually Transmitted Diseases. By Adina Nack . Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008. \$19.75 (Paper); \$64.50 (Cloth)." *Symbolic*

media's role in sustaining gendered double standards rather than dismantling them. Furthermore, Boyd calls out information sources as she writes, "Information sources outside the medical community...can reinforce stigma by promoting moralising stereotypes about sexually active women ⁵³." This reveals the instinctive nature of society, even macro-scale institutions, such as the internet, want to shame women about their sexual behaviour instead of providing neutral, non-biased information for help. Another common trope, seen especially in movies, is the Madonna-Whore complex, which paints women as either an innocent Madonna or a Whore⁵⁴. This creates a one-dimensional female with no complexity or depth, which limits sexual behaviour, revealing the desire not to fit into either stereotype, as either too experienced or not experienced enough. This binary justifies sexual shaming through comments placing a woman as a Madonna or a Whore. As a consequence of this complex, women's autonomy is diminished based on where they are placed on the continuum, leading to stereotypes and exclusion.

Although advertisers and producers have made progress in films to break free of sexual tropes for women, harmful stereotypes still endure. The media's portrayal of sexual abuse victims encourages judgment rather than empathy, negatively impacting the healing process. Teen Vogue's article indirectly touches on this by implying "Media narratives lay the groundwork for victim blaming⁵⁵." Questions such as "what was the victim doing/wearing" are common follow-ups to place shame upon the victim rather than sympathising⁵⁶. These ideals are consumed through media, which contributes to victim shaming and sexual cyberbullying. Teen Vogue article encourages critical thinking and open discussions to help rid of embedded

Interaction, vol. 33, no. 2, May 2010, pp. 333–336, <https://doi.org/10.1525/si.2010.33.2.333>. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁵³E. Boyd. "The Good Girl—Bad Girl Dichotomy: Sexual Double Standards, STDs, and Stigma Management Damaged Goods? Women Living with Incurable Sexually Transmitted Diseases. By Adina Nack. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008. \$19.75 (Paper); \$64.50 (Cloth)." Symbolic Interaction, vol. 33, no. 2, May 2010, pp. 333–336, <https://doi.org/10.1525/si.2010.33.2.333>. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁵⁴TV Tropes, "Madonna–Whore Complex." TV Tropes, tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/MadonnaWhoreComplex. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁵⁵K. Menza. "Teen Girls Take a Stand against Slut Shaming: What It Is, and Why You Should Care." Teen Vogue, 28 Oct. 2013, www.teenvogue.com/story/slut-shaming. Accessed 5 June 2025.

⁵⁶K. Menza. "Teen Girls Take a Stand against Slut Shaming: What It Is, and Why You Should Care." Teen Vogue, 28 Oct. 2013, www.teenvogue.com/story/slut-shaming. Accessed 5 June 2025.

complexes whilst still acknowledging the media's large impact in shaping how girls are judged about how they dress, act or express themselves sexually⁵⁷.

Overall, the media enables slut shaming to spread and reach victims anytime by destroying any safe and private spaces. Social media has caused stereotypes to thrive and endure over time, allowing for traditional morals, complexes and gender norms to scrutinise and humiliate women.

⁵⁷ K,Menza. "Teen Girls Take a Stand against Slut Shaming: What It Is, and Why You Should Care." Teen Vogue, 28 Oct. 2013, www.teenvogue.com/story/slut-shaming. Accessed 5 June 2025.

Conclusion

This personal interest project explores how gender affects discrimination and slut shaming culture in modern society. Primary research conducted early on revealed that slut shaming often occurs through casual remarks and online spaces, recognised as sexual cyberbullying, contributing to internalised shame and anxiety among women in particular. Support from various other primary research as well as secondary sources supports findings that gender affects the presence of slut shaming in an individual's life and significantly impacts women more than men. Slut shaming reinsinuates patriarchal power dynamics where women are inferior to men and their actual or assumed sexual behaviour is weaponised to insult them and other females. Results also show findings of psychological distress following slut shaming, which is also proven to be common, reflecting the normality of slut shaming in modern society. The findings of this personal interest project show the need for more social awareness of the deeply patriarchal intentions of slut shaming, which dehumanise women and work backwards from equality and feminist movements, which have brought women's power in society. The persistence of traditional gender norms is evident in the research conducted. It shows the impacts on both mental and social health, as it is a form of bullying that society often overlooks. Slut shaming has negative impacts on self-esteem, social inclusion, as well as an individual's life opportunities.

As an individual in modern society, the presence of slut shaming is overwhelming and is a large contributing factor to social anxiety and social exclusion. Through my personal experiences and case studies, I have become more intrigued with the amount of damage slut shaming can have on a woman's social self and why it does not continue across gender and doesn't affect men in the same way, and in cases, can benefit masculinity. Through my research, I have become more empathetic toward victims who have been slut shamed unfairly, and I have become more curious about the motives behind shaming. The topic of slut shaming has endured over decades, and opinions from all social groups, genders, ages, and races have been recorded, so the amount of information is overwhelming. Collecting my primary research and

finalising the PIP question, finding relevant information directly related to my interests was a challenge. To combat this, I read through multiple articles and eliminated ones that strayed from my topic. It was also a challenge to remain unbiased due to my unconscious gender bias, as well as personal experience, which could potentially impact the interpretation of information and my critical judgment. To limit this, I was continuously trying to write from an outsider's perspective, and I also had an individual of another gender read over my work, which allowed me to correct any mistakes or unconscious biased comments made.

This personal interest project shows that society needs to make an effort to minimise the normality of slut shaming that reinforces patriarchal power dynamics, therefore creating a continuing trend of negative social and mental health consequences for women. In the future, meso and macro institutions need to create gender inclusive education that challenges slut shaming, actively protect victims by avoiding silence and inaction and create consequences for offenders to create a safer environment for all of modern society.

Annotated resources

Primary research

Primary research: questionnaire

My questionnaire had 51 answers and 17 questions, incorporating a variety of possible questions, including open and closed questions and multiple choice, allowing for all dimensions of research to be explored. This questionnaire was distributed around schools and local sporting teams. In total, there were 17 males (33.3%) and 34 females (66.7%), which led to a gender imbalance, creating a possibly biased overall statistic. There were 36 Generation Z respondents (70.6%), 10 Generation X respondents (19.6%), 3 Generation Y respondents (5.9%) and 2 Generation Alpha respondents (3.9%). More respondents from Generations X, Y and Alpha would have been useful, but this was not a problem due to my PIP not having a critical focus on generations or age. My questionnaire helped me gain qualitative and quantitative data about my topic, exploring a range of questions regarding how slut shaming is experienced and perceived. My questionnaire was useful when finding statistics, responses that supported article findings and helped me to gain a rough overall understanding of slut shaming's presence and how it is experienced. I incorporated a variety of possible questions, including open and closed questions and multiple choice, allowing for all dimensions of research to be explored. My questionnaire proved invaluable when conducting my PIP due to its unique range of data and findings.

Primary research: interview → Teaching Staff

My constructed interview with teaching staff at a secondary school provided qualitative data that explored how schools respond to slut shaming and how it could impact students' mental and social health. The teaching staff was also critical when exploring the challenges that come along with identifying and punishing covert forms of slut shaming, enabling the continuity of slut shaming to go unpunished. This interview was particularly useful when conducting my research, as it gave me insight into how institutions deal with slut shaming and why they do what they do. I utilised the qualitative findings in Chapter 1 when discussing the psychological implications, and I also discussed how authority figures interpret the psychological consequences.

The responses also helped in Chapter 2 when investigating the gender dynamics, norms and stereotypes. Without the interviews, these chapters would lack first-hand accounts and would result in poor real-world connections. The wellbeing team also mentioned key aspects of PIP, including gender norms and power dynamics. To limit gender bias, I interviewed a male and a female to gain both of their critical perspectives. Even though this source was extremely valuable, there was a limitation of generalisability due to the teachers being from the same institution. Overall, this source proved vital in exploring how institutions punish and respond to slut shaming.

Primary research: interview → Student

My constructed interview with the student wellbeing team member provided qualitative data and investigated how slut shaming exists in school communities and if it is a key issue. This interview was helpful in Chapter 1 when discussing the psychological implications, and I also discussed how Generation Z interpret the psychological consequences. The responses also helped in Chapter 2 when investigating the gender dynamics, norms and stereotypes. This added an adolescent perspective as well, which was helpful to be relatable to all generations. Without the interview from the student, my chapters would lack first-hand accounts and would result in poor real-world connections, as well as being deprived of various generational views and opinions. Overall, this source proved vital in exploring how institutions punish and respond to slut shaming.

Primary research: personal reflection

Throughout my PIP process, I used my reflection to explore how slut shaming has impacted my own experiences as a young woman. These reflections revealed the emotional and psychological toll of being labelled and judged based on appearance, rumours and behaviours. My reflection helped me to empathise with questionnaire respondents and conduct in-depth studies while conducting secondary research, resulting in a large focus on how it impacts somebody's mental and social health. A bias is because it is my reflection, resulting in possible problems when exploring secondary research due to my health being impacted by slut shaming. To limit this bias, I utilised only quotes from my reflection, which allowed me to remain impartial and only use quotes when they supported secondary information. This ensured my

insights added authenticity and emotional depth to my PIP while maintaining academic integrity and balance.

Secondary research

Articles

Antonatos, Lydia. "Slut Shaming: What It Is, Examples, & Effects." Choosing Therapy, 16 Aug. 2022, www.choosingtherapy.com/slut-shaming/. Accessed 12 May 2025.

The work of licensed medical health counsellor, Lydia Antonatos, stresses the harmful nature of slut shaming and highlights the psychological distress as a consequence through her mental health article. This source played a critical role in formulating questionnaire questions and gave me information on data trends, power dynamics, and macro institutions' failures, which strengthened my understanding of my question. However, there is limited depth, and it is a general overview as well as the tone aiming for public education and not written for a scholarly inquiry. Because Antonato is a licensed mental health counsellor, the source is reliable and references other sources that found the same findings and relate directly to my topic, making it a valid article for my PIP. Overall, this mental health article is a great resource for my topic, as it helped me explore the basis of the psychological consequences of slut shaming.

Clark, Christina. "Sexual Cyberbullying - What You Need to Know | Alabama Campaign for Adolescent Sexual Health." Alabama Campaign for Adolescent Sexual Health, 23 Sept. 2024, alabamacampaign.org/sexual-cyberbullying-what-you-need-to-know/. Accessed 5 June 2025.

Christina Clark's article explores sexual cyberbullying and how the presence of technology and media has significantly helped grow slut shaming. Clark's article was extremely valuable to my PIP through its direct relevance to the media, specifically social media, mental impact, as well as a modern perspective. Although useful, this article lacks depth and doesn't provide detailed statistics. The content directly relates to sexual cyberbullying and the media's role in slut shaming. It is accurate because it is consistent with other sources and is from a credible organisation, backed by academic findings. Clark's article helps to outline and explain what sexual cyberbullying is, and helps to confirm my thoughts that the media would be a factor in growing slut shaming.

Power Dynamics in Gender Relations:» Gender Studies.” Gender Studies, Feb. 2024, <http://gender.study/issues-of-gender-and-development/power-dynamics-gender-relations/> Accessed 1 June 2025.

Gender studies academic article explores the power imbalances in gender, which are seen through underlying patriarchal tendencies, limiting female sexual autonomy or expression. This source proved its use as it uses a sociological lens to explore why slut shaming occurs for women more than it does for men. However, it poses a credibility risk as it is not peer-reviewed. The validity and accuracy of this article are strong because it is written by a sociologist and relates directly to key concepts explored in my PIP, including gender and social norms. Altogether, this article provided critical concepts and ideas that have furthered my understanding of gender norms and power dynamics.

Menza, Kaitlin. “Teen Girls Take a Stand against Slut Shaming: What It Is, and Why You Should Care.” Teen Vogue, 28 Oct. 2013, www.teenvogue.com/story/slut-shaming. Accessed 5 June 2025.

Kaitlin Menza’s article highlights how teenage girls are resisting slut shaming and how social media movements are aiming to redefine narratives around female empowerment. The connection to social media greatly helped me to understand the extent social media can be used in projecting voices in a positive light to combat slut shaming. Some limitations are the lack of academic tone and the failure to reflect any recent movements. This website is valid as it directly addresses slut shaming and provides real-world examples, and it is also reliable as it is a mainstream and heavily edited article. Overall, this article proved the hopefulness for the future and showed women taking agency, providing a new perspective of the media becoming a tool when fighting slut shaming.

Slut-Shaming | EBSCO.” EBSCO Information Services, Inc. | Wwww.ebsco.com, 2025, www.ebsco.com/research-starters/womens-studies-and-feminism/slut-shaming. Accessed 3 June 2025.

EBSCO’s research articles outline how slut shaming is shamed through factors in society such as media, double standards and social tendency to control women’s bodies. This was key in better understanding my topic as it explores how young women, particularly, react to this shame and how shaming varies depending on gender expression. The validity of this article is strong due to its direct relevance to my topic and hypothesis, as well as being in-depth and academic. The validity is also very strong as it is peer-reviewed and came from

a highly credible institution. This article, though, lacks data and first-person accounts. In total, this article added extreme understanding to my PIP.

Books/book chapters

Angrove, Gillian. "CHAPTER XII "She's Such a Slut!": The Sexualized Cyberbullying of Teen Girls and the Education Law Response The Sexualized Cyberbullying of Teen Girls and the Education Law Response from EGirls, ECitizens: Putting Technology, Theory and Policy into Dialogue with Girls' and Young Women's Voices on JSTOR." Jstor.org, 2024, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15nmj7f.16?searchText=cyberbullying&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dcyberbullying%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A94a3956ed006fc0e0193ce54c6962513&seq=1

Gillian Angrove's book chapter provided me with specific cases of how sexual cyberbullying manifests as well as the fatal and worst-case scenarios of slut shaming. This was a valuable resource as it explores the inaction of macro institutions and how mental health impacts from slut shaming can significantly affect someone. A disadvantage is that it has a large focus on the legal implications, which are irrelevant to my topic. This book chapter directly links to my focus on gender norms and sexual cyberbullying, making it valid as well being being reliable because it comes from a peer-reviewed site with various references. On the whole, this was a vital tool in deepening my empathy and understanding of my topic by learning about real cases.

Journal articles

Birkhead, Tim. "Promiscuity." *Daedalus*, vol. 136, no. 2, 2007, pp. 13–22. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20028106. Accessed 5 June 2025

Tim Birkhead explores promiscuity and how it is judged according to gender norms and social norms. This was relevant for my PIP as it provides a sociological lens to understand the roots of gender based judgment. Some limitations include an older publication date. I used this article to complement Clark's article, as there is not a strong focus on media, but it provides a great exploration of my topic. Birkhead's journal article directly relates to gender norms and the differences in sexual judgment, which means it is a valid site, and because the journal article is peer reviewed, it significantly increases the reliability. In pairing with other articles, Clark's research was useful in cementing my other findings and providing academic language and tone.

Boyd, Emily M. "The Good Girl—Bad Girl Dichotomy: Sexual Double Standards, STDs, and Stigma Management Damaged Goods? Women Living with Incurable Sexually Transmitted Diseases. By Adina Nack. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008. \$19.75 (Paper); \$64.50 (Cloth)." *Symbolic Interaction*, vol. 33, no. 2, May 2010, pp. 333–336, <https://doi.org/10.1525/si.2010.33.2.333>. Accessed 5 June 2025.

Emily Boyd's article explores the Good girl-bad girl dichotomy commonly referred to in media, particularly social media and the stigma and humiliation that come along with this dichotomy. This was a useful article as it links societal shaming directly to negative health outcomes and understands the cemented gendered norms. Some limitations were the small number of times the media was referred to, but I was able to relate the findings to my PIP topic. Due to Boyd's focus on female sexuality being policed, it is valid as it helps me explore key questions surrounding gender norms, and it is reliable because it is written by researchers with qualifications in sociology, as well as being peer reviewed. Boyd's article was vital in understanding dichotomies often portrayed in the media, and through her research, I was able to relate her findings to my topic.

Endendijk, Joyce J., et al. "He Is a Stud, She Is a Slut! A Meta-Analysis on the Continued Existence of Sexual Double Standards." *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol. 24, no. 2, 27 Dec. 2019, pp. 163–190, journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1088868319891310, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868319891310>. Accessed 1 June 2025.

Joyce J Endendijk's psychological journal tackles the sexual double standards and how or if they continue over time and gender. This journal was extremely valuable as it directly explores the sexual double standard and looks at my cross-cultural focus on gender, and relates to the concept of change and continuity. The only limitation is the lack of personal narratives. The validity and reliability of this article are strong due to its focus on gender disparities, psychological and social consequences and is peer reviewed and written by credible authors who specialise in psychology and social sciences. As a whole, this article was a treasured secondary source that thoroughly helped my understanding of the sexual double standard.

Heise, Lori, et al. "Gender Inequality and Restrictive Gender Norms: Framing the Challenges to Health." *The Lancet*, vol. 393, no. 10189, June 2019, pp. 2440–2454, [www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)30652-X/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)30652-X/abstract), [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(19\)30652-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(19)30652-x). Accessed 1 June 2025.

Lori Heise's scholarly article explores the restrictive norms for women's sexual expression that are directly reflected through negative mental and physical health outcomes. Heise's article was useful as it underscores society's control over women's bodies and the negative outcomes because of it, and uses diverse and credible perspectives, which add to its academic tone. A challenge was making the links between gender and social norms in my chapter, as this article isn't directly about slut shaming. This journal article is reliable because it is rigorously peer reviewed and is from an internationally recognised organisation. Overall, this article was extremely valuable in my research because of its academic perspectives, which explored the traditional social norms.

Stewart, Rebecca, et al. "Gendered Stereotypes and Norms: A Systematic Review of Interventions Designed to Shift Attitudes and Behaviour." *Heliyon*, vol. 7, no. 4, Apr. 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e06660>.

Rebecca Stewart's peer-reviewed article examines the gender stereotypes and social norms that contribute to slut shaming. This was vital for my chapter as it explains how slut shaming is reinforced by gender norms, the psychological consequences, as well as the educational approaches that have been shown to change harmful attitudes, contributing to an optimistic future. Because of the density of the article, various irrelevant stereotypes were discussed. This article is both valid and reliable because it has direct alignment to my topic, is academically based and is peer reviewed and from a credible and qualified author. Altogether, Stewart's article provided academic insight about why gender stereotypes lead to slut shaming.

Videos and webpages

Madonna–Whore Complex.” TV Tropes, tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/MadonnaWhoreComplex. Accessed 5 June 2025.

The Madonna whore complex is something that is portrayed in internet memes, movies, and talked about in literature. This webpage explores how women are divided into stereotypes, which have clear psychological impacts. This webpage was useful as it provided a concise overview of slut shaming culture in media and helped to show how media and cultural narratives reinforce the sexual double standard. The choice to use this webpage is valid

because it explores an internationally recognised trope, as well as directly relating to gender discrimination. This webpage is not a credible or reliable website and lacks strong evidence or detailed analysis. In use with other secondary research, these findings were considerably useful and were backed up by other secondary sources used.

Rau, R. "Prime Video: No Place to Hide." Primevideo.com, 2025, www.primevideo.com/region/fe/detail/0JXL30GSBHNK8MCHB3DGX31ESU/ref=atv_sr_fle_c_Tn74RA_1_1_1?sr=1-1&pageTypeldSource=ASIN&pageTypeld=B0CPGQTR6J&qid=1745729259183. Accessed 12 May 2025.

This documentary investigates the devastating case of Rehtaeh Parsons' suicide due to sexual cyberbullying and interviews with close friends and family members. The real-world cases were essential in conducting my research on the psychological effects of slut shaming and combining technology, gender and psychology, adding academic value to my PIP. Although there is a level of bias in the family and close friends, which could give an emotional opinion, not an academic perspective. This documentary is extremely valid due to its relevance to my PIP and provides me with a first-hand experience that adds depth and emotion to my PIP; it is accurate due to the case being a legal case and including real people from this case. Overall, the documentary was a cherished source that added real-world examples to my PIP.