

## **ABSTRACT**

### **DISSERTATION/THESIS/RESEARCH PAPER/CREATIVE PROJECT:**

Humor and Personality: An Exploration of the Predictors and Effects of Rape Humor

**STUDENT:** Allison Cipriano

**DEGREE:** Master of Arts

**COLLEGE:** College of Health

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The detrimental effects of sexist humor have been documented in the social psychological literature. However the effects of rape jokes, a subcategory of sexist humor, have not yet been investigated. The question of whether rape jokes are harmful remains a controversial topic in mainstream media in the United States. The current work seeks to address this question and investigate which men are more likely to endorse rape jokes and why. Endorsement of rape jokes may function as a particularly effective form of recovery from masculinity threat. Moreover, the effectiveness of rape jokes as a recovery strategy from masculinity threat may address a gap in the understanding of why rape jokes continue to be popularly used. The current work investigated the function of rape jokes as a recovery tool from masculinity threat as well as the effects of rape joke endorsement on rape myth acceptance and self-reported rape proclivity. This research also sought to investigate the potential moderating effects of masculinity contingency and hostile sexism. Additionally, the current work explored whether there were differences between heterosexual and sexual minority men in these outcomes. Implications and limitations of the results are discussed.