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HNSON Staff Writer

x of undocumented immigrants entering the Rio
Valley has brought with it the attention and focus



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Dr. Paul Parsons, Dean School of Communications

Editorial Board

Twenty-seven faculty members in Elon's School of Communications served as the Editorial Board that selected 10 undergraduate research papers for the 2016 fall issue.

From more than 100 research papers written in advanced School of Communications classes, 34 papers were submitted to the journal by students through the encouragement and mentoring of capstone teachers and other professors in the school.

Professors who served as the Editorial Board were Jonathan Albright, Bill Anderson, Janna Anderson, Vanessa Bravo, Lee Bush, Vic Costello, Kenn Gaither, Jessica Gisclair, Don Grady, Ben Hannam, Anthony Hatcher, Jooyun Hwang, Dan Haygood, Jonathan Jones, Julie Lellis, Harlen Makemson, Barbara Miller, William Moner, Phillip Motley, Tom Nelson, George Padgett, Paul Parsons, Glenn Scott, Michael Skube, Jessalynn Strauss, Hal Vincent, and Qian Xu.

Thanks also go to Bryan Baker, who recorded the website's student introductions; Associate Dean Don Grady, who reviewed articles to help ensure the quality of the journal; and Tommy Kopetskie, who proofread articles and updated the publication's website.

Editor's Note

This issue of the journal covered many topics. Three articles dealt with the portrayal of people in movies and newspapers. Another three articles investigated advertisements, institutional messages, and humor to see how they used messages effectively. Two articles looked at characteristics of successful talents in reality shows or of powerful influencers in corporate-sponsored videos. The last two articles examined the role of women's magazines.

Through a content analysis of the *Rush Hour* trilogy, a biracial martial arts action comedy, Lee found Asians were stereotyped the most frequently among all ethnicities, and most stereotypes were conveyed through humor and dialogue based on a character's behavior. After analyzing the top five shows from nonlinear distribution platforms, such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime, Weaver found underrepresentation, along with misrepresentation, are still major issues, although online streaming platforms offer more diversity than traditional television. Based on framing analysis of articles published by newspapers in Arizona and Texas, Jasper found illegal child immigrants from Latin America were portrayed as both victims and criminals. Through analysis of primary media documents, annual reports, and historical company analyses, Nichols found the American Tobacco Company used celebrity endorsements to generate the company's profits in the 1930s. Using framing theory, Wirth analyzed 22 press releases published by the European Council on the official European Union website. She found that the EU's public diplomacy efforts were effective and strategically communicated the institution's intent and commitment to foreign publics.

Compisano analyzed the content of comedian Hannibal Buress' four major releases. This case study found he used persuasive methods based on incongruity, superiority, and relief theories to engage audiences and address sociopolitical subject matter. Based on four in-depth interviews conducted with casting agents, Geswelli identified factors that help create successful reality TV shows. Based on a content analysis of beauty company Maybelline's sponsored videos, Forbes found five characteristics that three influencers employed in brand marketing: to articulate, be relatable, knowledgeable, helpful, and confident. Garrity analyzed how three women's magazines covered mental health conditions including depression, anxiety, and stress. Her study found an imbalanced representation of mental health conditions, a belief that mental health conditions can be managed, and a stigma surrounding this issue. Women's magazines have long struggled to balance their desire to empower women with their need to make them ad targets—thus providing readers with ambivalent messages. Lanquist found the teen magazine *Seventeen* was not an exception.

The students who published their paper in this issue should be congratulated for writing thought-provoking research papers within a short period of time. Of course, as they acknowledged, it would not be possible without their mentors' effective guidance. I hope the articles in this issue will inspire students in future semesters to commit to examining important research questions and submit their papers to this journal.

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The Manipulation and Role of Stereotypes in the Rush Hour Trilogy

Matt Lee

Media Arts & Entertainment Elon University

Abstract

While the Rush Hour trilogy is one of the most commercially successful biracial martial arts action comedies, the films are known for stereotyping characters. Through a content analysis, the author coded each scene and character in the films based on the ethnicity, stereotype, and implication of the stereotype presented. While the films perpetuate a number of stereotypes, most of them are generalizations exaggerated for comedic reasons. The film communicates them mostly through dialogue and behaviors for humor, yet the trilogy does include positive stereotypes that divert from the norm. These findings may contribute to the discussion of stereotypes in films and provide insight into how stereotypes are manipulated and presented to influence audiences.

I. Introduction

Racial stereotypes often permeate films, especially comedy. In most cases, audiences will find racial stereotypes in comedies inoffensive, as the explicit joke is made enjoyable through humor (Gates, 2012). In this form, however, racial stereotypes are naturalized and perpetuated, "thereby making viewers susceptible to the beliefs of racial difference" (Park, Gabbadon, & Chernin, 2006, p. 173). One of the most racially motivated films, *Rush Hour*, follows a black police officer and an Asian detective. This biracial martial arts buddy action comedy is full of stereotypes and yet the film broke box office records and spawned two sequels, *Rush Hour 2* and *Rush Hour 3*.

In the first *Rush Hour*, Detective Yan Naing Lee (Jackie Chan) travels to Los Angeles. He meets Detective James Carter (Chris Tucker), who is ordered to "babysit" Lee and keep him from the investigation of the Chinese consulate's missing daughter. The two overcome their differences and work together to solve the case. In *Rush Hour 2*, Lee and Carter reunite for a vacation in Hong Kong. After exploring the city, the two stumble upon a Fu-Cang-Long Triad gang smuggling counterfeit money to the United States. The two travel back to Los Angeles and then to Las Vegas and must work together again to solve the crime. In *Rush Hour 3*, Lee and Carter join forces to protect the Chinese consulate's daughter after his attempted assassination. The two end up in Paris to confront the Triad and a mysterious crime lord.

Each film in the *Rush Hour* trilogy exemplifies common racial stereotypes of Asians, Blacks, Whites, Latinos, and French. Despite of the film stereotypes of many races, audiences flocked to see the movie in theaters. Overall, the three films were a commercial success at the box office, making more than \$500 million domestically and more than \$850 million worldwide (*Box office*, 2016). All three films are among the top five highest grossing martial arts films of all time with *Rush Hour 2* at number one. *Rush Hour 2*,

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This undergraduate project was conducted as a partial requirement of a research course in communications.

the most commercially successful of the trilogy, became the 11th highest-grossing film of 2001 worldwide ("Action", 2016). Therefore, it seems as though the use of stereotypes in this film had little effect on the box office ratings. This project examined the use of stereotypes in *Rush Hour*, *Rush Hour* 2, and *Rush Hour* 3 to analyze how the stereotypes are distributed, evolved and intensified as the series continued.

II. Literature Review

This paper reviewed literature on social identity theory and how Chinese and Blacks have been portrayed in Hollywood film. The author also examined previous studies on the *Rush Hour* films.

Key Concepts

It is important to first distinguish the difference between prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination. Prejudice is a cognitive reflection or attitude of another group based on a certain belief; stereotypes are attributions of a certain trait to a specific group; and discrimination is the biased behavior of a group based on a belief or trait (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, & Esses, 2010). In this paper, the author looked specifically at stereotypes and how they are portrayed in the *Rush Hour* films.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory seeks to explain how people identify themselves. It says that people's idea of who they are can be based on their categorization of their identity (Tajifel & Turner, 1986). The first phase of the social identity theory is categorization, which is based on an intergroup, a process of self-identification to a certain group based on similar appearances, social class, personalities, or occupations (Dovidio et al., 2010). Tajifel notes that identifying with a certain group adds to a person's self-image and, consequently, intensifies one's tendency to place one group higher than another. This categorization leads to social comparison and stereotypes, as people who identify with an intergroup tend to categorize differences and similarities between theirs and another in-group leading to prejudices and discrimination (Dovidio et al., 2010). Therefore, they propose "intergroup relations begin when people begin thinking about themselves as 'we,' and others as 'them,' instead of seeing group members as distinct individuals" (Dovidio et al., 2010, p. 15). For example, in Rush Hour, when Detective Carter first meets Detective Lee, he assumes that, because Lee is Asian, he will have a hard time understanding English. It is later revealed that Lee speaks fluent English as he says, "I didn't say I didn't [speak English]. You assumed I didn't" (Ratner, 1998). Social identity theory is the explanation for why Carter believes Lee will not speak English. Carter identifies himself as someone who speaks English and anyone he compares as different must then have a difficult time speaking English. Therefore, the concept of social identity theory explains the formation of stereotypes and how they become perpetuated in society and through film.

Identifying Racist Discourse

Most stereotypes happen at a micro-level, meaning that everyday talk and actions produce ideological and structural stereotypes (Myers & Williamson, 2001). For example, Myers and Williamson's study analyzed the insinuation of racist speech. They found that when their participant, Janet, asked her Black male friend "why he did not wear a chain," she was associating Black rappers who wear chains to her Black friend (Myers & Williamson, 2001, p. 20). Berg identifies stereotypes through 11 theses: rigid logic, basis in fact, generalizations, worthwhile predictors, uncontextualized dialogue, dominant majority, ideological motives, in-group influence, repetition, normalized beliefs, and ignorance (Berg, 2002). Through these 11 theses, Berg is able to identify stereotypes discussed at a micro-level. Similarly, Kapur uses a textual methodology of identifying stereotypes. He categorizes micro-level stereotypes through reduction, segregation, pride, association, belittlement, latent hate, denial, indifference, and presumption (Kapur, 1999). Both Berg and Kapur have created coding systems of identifying racist language.

Chinese Stereotypes in Hollywood Film

Chinese people have been portrayed in film in varying ways throughout history. From the time of silent films and the dawn of motion picture, Caucasians regularly portrayed Chinese individuals by painting their

faces yellow with theatrical makeup (Cai & Zhu, 2013). During the 1930s, the Chinese characters in films were portrayed mostly negatively with the rise of Fu Manchu, a fictional character created by a British author. Cai and Zhu note that Fu Manchu is a "revengeful, merciless, frightening evil with a long mustache, darkly painted eyebrows with heavy eyeliner and long fingernails" (Cai & Zhu, 2013, p. 9). Fu Manchu inspired other Asian villains, such as the ruthless Emperor Ming in *Flash Gordon* (Xing, 1998).

At the same time, however, another Chinese character named Charlie Chan rose to fame. Chan was a direct contrast to the "yellow-peril" of Fu Manchu, a benevolent, intelligent, and quiet figure. Xing proposes that the Japanese, during World War II, inspired Chan's positive traits. The fact that the Chinese fought against the Japanese, an American enemy, supported the idea that the Chinese were benevolent, thus influencing Chan's character (Xing, 1998, p. 55). After World War II, the next character to pervade Hollywood was Bruce Lee in the 1960s. Lee represented a combination of Fu Manchu's viciousness and Chan's heroism. The martial arts style of Lee's Hollywood films also promoted the stereotype that Asians are skilled at Kung Fu (Marchetti, 2012). The final Chinese character in Hollywood is Jackie Chan, who has become the modern stereotype of a Chinese person. In Chan's Hollywood films, his characters tend to be "the heroic, funny, desexualized unthreatening oriental male" (Park et al., 2006, p. 163). Gates writes, "Chan demonstrates the vulnerability of the male body in a way that would appeal to the female viewership as well as the male viewer" (Gates, 2012, p. 86).

Cai and Zhu analyzed the content of three films from each period in which Hollywood featured a dominant Chinese figure: *Marlowe* (1969), *Big Brawl* (1980), and *Rush Hour* (1998). They found that Bruce Lee in *Marlowe* exemplified a cruel, callous devious character who had hostile relations with Americans. In contrast, Jackie Chan's character in *Big Brawl* was intelligent, impulsive, confident, and hardworking with mixed relations with Americans. Finally, Chan's character in *Rush Hour* was responsible, warm, and honorable with friendly relations with Americans. Cai and Zhu concluded that Chinese characters in modern times have been mostly represented as good guys with hardworking and honorable characteristics.

Black Stereotypes in Hollywood Films

Black representation in film can be traced back to the minstrel show, in which Whites painted their face black in order to portray a Black man. In 1915, *Birth of a Nation* exemplified the minstrel show on film with some White actors portraying African Americans (Berry, 2009). Director D.W. Griffith, known for glorifying the Ku Klux Klan and negatively depicting African Americans, controversially stereotyped Black men as unintelligent and sexually aggressive toward White women. In the 1940s, Schulman describes how African Americans were now able to portray themselves, but in roles such as, "the nurturing Mammy figure, the deferential Uncle Tom, the flashy con-artist, [and] the happy-go-lucky Negro whose banjo has been replaced by a 'boom box'" (Schulman, 1992, p. 2). All these characters in films during this time were subsequently depicted as unintelligent with incomprehensible dialect, poor grammar, and extreme innocence. W. E. B. Dubois argued on behalf of the NAACP that films with Black actors must be about them, by them, for them, and near them in theaters (Marchetti, 2012).

In the 1950s and 1960s, a new type of film called "the Negro Cycle" became popular in which films were produced by Whites but humanized Blacks on screen (Nishime, 2004). Berry (2009) proposes that the Civil Rights movement of this time led to the creation of more roles for Black people even if under the supervision of White directors. In the 1970s, blaxploitation films represented issues Blacks faced including poverty and interracial marriage and became popular, but did so in a stereotypical and caricatured way (Schulman 1992). Berry content-analyzed Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (1967) and Guess Who? (2005). The original version featured a White doctor whose daughter brought home a Black unemployed man. Berry found that the 2005 remake simply reversed stereotypes placing Blacks in the role of the doctors and Whites as the unemployed. Berry essentially concluded that Blacks were simply being put into White roles instead of having roles written for them (Berry, 2009). Though Blacks began to have roles written for them, they were always subordinate to their White counterpart, who acted as their "gatekeepers" (Marchetti, 2012). In cases such as Lethal Weapon and Die Hard with a Vengance, White actors, Mel Gibson and Bruce Willis, respectively, were paid more and had more screen time than the Black co-stars, Danny Glover and Samuel L. Jackson (Nishime, 2004). By the late 1990s and early 2000s, Black stars, such as Eddie Murphy and Chris Tucker, had gained top billing in films and more screen time, but were stereotyped as "infantile comedians eating fried chicken while saying 'mack out'" (Park et al., 2006, p. 163). Nishime argues that Asians have replaced Whites as "gatekeepers" for Blacks saying, "Asians are pawns that stand in for Whites to police and repress Blacks" (Nishime, 2004, p. 43).

Rush Hour Comedy and Stereotypes

The *Rush Hour* trilogy worked to mitigate the stereotypes of Chinese and Blacks in Hollywood films. Actor Tzi Ma, who plays Consul Han, said, "To the best of my knowledge, this is the first Hollywood film with two heroes of color. This movie is really a melting pot" (Gates, 2012, p. 88). African Americans, after blaxploitation, flocked to see martial arts films in which "the heroes of the film are set in opposition to White authority on both sides of the law" (Nishime, 2004, p. 51). Marchetti (2012) notes that long after the "kung fu craze" of Bruce Lee in the early 1970s, African Americans remained loyal to the art of martial arts films. Many Asians went to see the films, as Gates describes, because "Asian heroes became honorary American heroes" (Gates, 2012, p. 90). The *Rush Hour* film became a trailblazer, putting minorities at the forefront and changing their role from racial politics to multiculturalism. Though the *Rush Hour* trilogy forge a step toward multiculturalism, the films still revert back to common stereotypes that exaggerate race (Nishime, 2004).

Yet, audience members were able to overlook the racist stereotypes because minorities were making the racial jokes, the jokes went across color lines, the stereotypes were relevant to the plot and characterizations, and the two leading men with the stereotypes were portrayed as friends (Park et al., 2006). Thus, Rush Hour's ability to depict an Asian and an African American in a positive image overruled the racist stereotypes in the film. However, some authors like Gates argue that the stereotypes in comedy form mask the embedded racism. He says, "These Hollywood films with their Asian heroes are not intended to inspire America's increasingly ethnically diverse demographic but to pacify and entertain America's White mainstream" (Gates, 2012, p. 92). Park expounds on this idea concluding that racial stereotypes in the Rush Hour films validate and enable viewers to naturalize the stereotypes through humor.

Scholars are divided on whether the diversity in the Rush Hour films justifies the overt racial stereotypes. While other research had looked at offensiveness in specific Rush Hour films, the author examined the stereotypes throughout the trilogy, specifically how the stereotypes evolved and grew throughout the Rush Hour series and how they were distributed among various ethnic groups:

RQ1: What is the distribution of stereotypes among the ethnicities portrayed?

RQ2: How are the ethnicities portrayed?

RQ3: What is the purpose of the stereotypes identified?

RQ4: Do the overall stereotypes increase in the sequels?

This study used a content analysis to identify, quantify, and categorize the implicit use of stereotypes in the *Rush Hour* films.

III. Methods

This content analysis was adopted to identify the use of stereotypes throughout each *Rush Hour* film of the trilogy. This method goes "outside the immediately observable physical vehicles of communication and relies on their symbolic qualities, thus rendering the unobserved context of the data analyzable" (Krippendorff, 1989, p. 403). Therefore, a content analysis ventures beyond the surface-level qualities and quantifies a deeper understanding of the context. The analysis included a careful examination of the three films, with pauses to record the script, behavior, and coding outlined below. Despite subjectivity involved in the coding, the analysis was based on thorough examination of the stereotype.

Character Record

To answer RQ1, each major character in the film was identified and categorized. The characters were recorded based on their race (Asian, African American, etc.), role in the film (villain, hero, extra, etc.), three key characteristics (loud, shy, impulsive, etc.) and appearance (costuming, makeup, etc.). Through the character record, the author was able to identify the number of times each race was invoked in a stereotype as well as how each stereotype was exemplified by race, characteristic, or costuming. The unit analysis included the specific character as well as the specific identification of the stereotype.

Identifying Stereotypes in the Films

Once identifying who was stereotyped, the author analyzed both the denotative and connotative meaning of each stereotype (Krippendorff, 1989). To answer RQ2, the author recorded any incident or episode in the *Rush Hour* films that used an explicit or implicit stereotype. As defined earlier, stereotypes are attributions of a certain trait to a specific group of people. The author categorized any stereotyped dialogue, behavior, or song based on Berg's (2002) 11 theses of stereotypes and Kapur's (1999) categorizations of racism. A stereotype was depicted when Tucker punched Chan and said, "I'm sorry! All you all look alike" (Ratner, 2001). The author counted the remark that "all Asians look alike" as a stereotype against Asians, more specifically a stereotype under Berg's thesis of generalization.

Manifest Categorization

Using Berg's theses of stereotypes, the author also categorized the actual content of the stereotypes. The first category, physical stereotypes, defines a stereotype as associating a physical trait with a group of people because they are of that race (Berg, 2002). For example, the following statement would be categorized as rigid logic: "If Chan is Asian, then he must be short because all Asians are short." The second category, historical stereotype, defines a stereotype as a trait rooted in history or the media. For example, Tucker knew that Chan is Asian, invoked a stereotype that Asians know kung-fu, and assumed that he must know kung-fu; perhaps this is informed based on numerous kung-fu movies featuring mainly Asians. The final category, behavioral stereotype, defines stereotypes that associate a certain behavior with a person of a certain race. For example, Chan assuming that Tucker wants some fried chicken because he is African American would be categorized as a behavioral stereotype. Some of the stereotypes may fall into more than one category.

Latent Categorization

Using Kapur's (1998) categorization of racism, the author answered RQ2. Each stereotype was defined as either positive or negative. Positive stereotypes put the people of that race in a favorable light, whereas negative stereotypes cast the people of that race in a negative light. Positive stereotypes were noted in three categories: superior ability, diverting from the norm, and moral excellence. For example, Tucker believing that Chan is skilled at kung-fu would be a positive stereotype of superior ability; Tucker eating Chinese food would be a positive stereotype because it diverts from the norm; and Chan saying all White people are noble would fall under moral excellence. Negative stereotypes were on the opposite side: weakness, generalization, and moral shortcoming. For example, Chan stating that Tucker talks too much would fall under weakness; Tucker saying Chan looks like all other Asians would be generalization; and Tucker explaining that all White people are racist would be a moral shortcoming. Similar to the manifest categorization, some latent stereotypes can fall under more than one category.

Purpose of the Stereotype

To answer RQ3, the author expanded on Berry's (2009) method and defined the role the stereotype played in the film. The purpose each stereotype serves was categorized as humor, plot point, or transition. For example, Tucker commenting that Chan looks like all the other Asians is for humor; Tucker saying to follow the rich White man is plot point; and Chan explaining that they should go to a Chinese restaurant is transition. This element of coding involves some qualitative subjectivity as the director's true intention for the stereotype may differ from the author's interpretation.

IV. Findings & Discussion

Distribution of Stereotypes Among Ethnicities

Use of stereotypes totaled 113 incidents in the *Rush Hour* trilogy. The sequels have more stereotypes than the original; the film with the most stereotypes is *Rush Hour 2*. The longest film in the series, *Rush Hour 1* (97 minutes), contains the fewest stereotypes while the shortest film in the series, *Rush Hour 2* (90 minutes), features the most stereotypes.

The *Rush Hour* films have more stereotypes of Asians than any other ethnic group. Asians were stereotyped 61 times throughout the series, in comparison with African Americans, who were stereotyped 35 times. Asians tended to be stereotyped less in the final film than the previous two, while African Americans were stereotyped equally in the three. Other ethnic groups were not exempted; but they were stereotyped minimally, especially compared to Asians and African Americans (See Table 1). Whites were featured in all three films and had 12 stereotypes in total. In both *Rush Hour 1* and *Rush Hour 2*, a Hispanic woman character is featured, but only the character in the second film is stereotyped. More ethnicities are portrayed in the third installment with some French and Arab stereotypes featured in *Rush Hour 3*. Most of the stereotypes include the ethnicities of the two stars, Chan representing the Asians and Tucker representing the African Americans.

	African Americans	Asians	Whites	Hispanics	French	Arabs	Total
Rush Hour 1	9	19	3	0	0	0	31
Rush Hour 2	13	26	8	1	0	0	48
Rush Hour 3	13	16	1	0	3	1	34
Total	35	61	12	1	3	1	113

Table 1: The three movies' stereotypical portrayal of ethnicities

In all three films, African Americans are committing most of the stereotyping, followed by Asians, Whites, French and Movie (See Table 2). This is mainly due to Tucker's lines being the overwhelming vehicle for the stereotypes. The movie itself stereotypes characters with its music and editing cuts.

	African Americans	Asians	Whites	Movie*	French	Total
Rush Hour 1	21	5	3	2	0	31
Rush Hour 2	32	13	3	0	0	48
Rush Hour 3	16	9	2	1	6	34
Total	69	27	8	3	6	113

Table 2: The number of stereotyping used by actors of different ethnic groups

Notes: The movie* column shows how the movie itself does the stereotyping through music or dialogue, in which case no specific ethnic group did the stereotyping.

Analyzing the Nature of the Stereotypes

Most of the stereotypes in the trilogy are classified as behavioral and historical (See Table 3). More of the stereotypes are focused on the person's behavior (54.1%) or historical background (31.6%) rather than their actual physical appearance (14.3%). A common behavioral stereotype in all of the films is based on the ethnicity's food. For example, in Rush Hour 1, Carter asks Lee if he wants a Cup O' Noodle. In Rush Hour 2, Carter says he wants his chicken "dead and deep fried. Have you ever heard of Popeye's?" (Ratner, 2001). In Rush Hour 3, the Frenchman says he will drink a knockoff Starbucks cup so he can be an American.

Table 3: The context of the stereotypes in the films

	Rush Hour 1	Rush Hour 2	Rush Hour 3	Total
Historical	16	15	11	42 (31.6%)
Behavioral	17	30	25	72 (54.1%)
Physical	7	10	2	19 (14.3%)

Some of the content analyzed contains two stereotypes. For example, when Carter takes Lee to Chinatown, he says, "Looks just like home. I've never been to China but I'm sure it looks just like this. You may see one of your cousins walking around here" (Ratner, 1998). This dialogue implies that Lee's cousin might be in Chinatown based on the notion that all Asians look alike, a physical stereotype. Yet another stereotype implicit in this dialogue is that the Chinatown in Los Angeles resembles China because of its temples and lanterns. This stereotype is motivated not on physicality, such as the first stereotype, but based on historical context that oriental-looking temples are Chinese.

Most of the stereotypes in the film are suggested through dialogue and behavior (See Table 4). For example, in *Rush Hour* 2, Lee is able to run on a truck to avoid getting hit while Carter rolls along the truck because he does not have kung-fu skills. This behavior, though comedic through the editing, portrays Lee as a skilled karate hero and accentuates Carter's reputation as the loud-mouthed, trouble-making sidekick. Another example of an implicit stereotype is when Carter corrects Lee saying, "You mean Tito. Toto is what we ate last night for dinner" (Ratner, 2001). This comment expounds upon the historical context that Asians eat dogs. In both the behavioral and dialogue instances, the stereotype used is more repressed than blatantly addressing the stereotype.

Table 4: Use of the stereotypes in different forms

	Rush Hour 1	Rush Hour 2	Rush Hour 3	Total
Dialogue	19	36	19	74
Behavior	10	11	13	34
Skill	3	2	2	7

As the films progressed, the stereotypes became more blatant. In *Rush Hour 2*, Carter accidentally punches Lee saying, "Sorry! All y'all look alike" (Ratner, 2001). Carter just outright says that Asians all look alike rather than its predecessor film saying, "You may see one of your cousins here [in Chinatown]" (Ratner, 1998). In *Rush Hour 3*, the Arab stereotype came when Carter said, "We all knew them Iranians were terrorists," but it is revealed that the Iranians are scientists (Ratner, 2007). Carter specifically addresses the stereotype that Arabs are terrorists.

Most of the song stereotypes are used as transitions. For example in *Rush Hour 1*, once it is revealed that Lee speaks English, a Chinese gong rings. There are also instances in which the song personifies the characters. For example, Carter listens to Jay-Z and Lee listens to the Beach Boys, both say each is classic American music. In *Rush Hour 2*, an Asian man sings Michael Jackson in a Chinese accent. Carter says, "This man is destroying a classic" and proceeds to take the stage from him and sing the song himself (Ratner, 2001). This stereotype counted as *skill* because it implies that Chinese people cannot sing Michael Jackson like African Americans, a specific skill.

Positive and Negative Portrayals

All groups are portrayed more negatively than positively. Stereotype incidents averaged about 42 in each film, with 10 positive stereotypes and 32 negative incidents. The group portrayed most positively in all three films is Asians with 15 positive stereotypes, but they are also the most negatively portrayed with 51 stereotypes (See Tables 5 & 6). African Americans, represented mainly by Tucker, are the second most positively (12) and negatively (29) stereotyped group. Whites are only represented positively twice and negatively 11 times. Most of the White characters in the film are cruel, greedy, and evil. In *Rush Hour 2*,

Carter says, "Follow the rich White man," believing the White man is the logical villain (Ratner, 2001). In all three films, the main villain is a White male.

Table 5: Distribution of positive stereotypes among ethnicities

	Rush Hour 1	Rush Hour 2	Rush Hour 3	Total
Positive Asians	3	7	5	15
Positive African Americans	3	5	4	12
Positive Whites	0	2	0	2
Positive Hispanics	0	0	0	0
Positive French	0	0	1	1
Positive Arabs	0	0	0	0
Total	6	14	10	30

Table 6: Distribution of negative stereotypes among ethnicities

	Rush Hour 1	Rush Hour 2	Rush Hour 3	Total
Negative Asians	17	21	13	51
Negative African Americans	7	10	12	29
Negative Whites	3	7	1	11
Negative Hispanics	0	1	0	1
Negative French	0	0	2	2
Negative Arabs	0	0	1	1
Total	27	39	29	95

Though Asians have the most negative stereotypes, most of those are generalizations, such as Carter insinuating that all Asians are from Beijing. Yet Asians also possess the most weaknesses with 14 incidents in this category (see Table 7). Many of these weaknesses included their inability to understand or communicate in English. In *Rush Hour 1*, Carter says his famous line, "Do you understand the words that are coming out of my mouth?" (Ratner, 1998). In the sequel, Carter answers his own question, "Nobody understands the words that are coming out of your mouth" (Ratner, 2001). A perpetuating joke throughout the trilogy is Lee's inability to speak English. Even in the film's bloopers, most incidents include Chan fumbling the lines or mispronouncing words.

Table 7: Classification of each stereotype in all three Rush Hour films

	Moral Excellence (+)	Diverting from the Norm (+)	Improved Ability (+)	Moral Shortcoming (-)	Generalization (-)	Weakness (-)	Total
African Americans	2	5	8	6	22	6	49
Asians	3	6	9	5	42	14	79
Whites	1	1	0	8	5	3	18
Hispanics	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
French	0	1	1	0	1	1	4
Arabs	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Total	6	13	18	20	72	24	153

African Americans in the film have some positive stereotypes, especially when Carter is able to divert from his normal blabbering and fight alongside Lee. On the negative side, African Americans have mostly generalizations with an even amount of moral shortcomings and weakness, all second to other ethnic groups. These consisted of mostly historical generalizations of African Americans hating cops, eating soul food, and listening to Michael Jackson. An interesting example of weaknesses displayed is whenever African Americans diverted from their culture. For example, in *Rush Hour 2*, Carter criticizes Kenny for being an African American owning a Chinese restaurant on Crenshaw.

Whites have the most moral shortcomings, as the main villain in *Rush Hour 1* and *Rush Hour 3* are White men. Aside from these villains, Carter consistently portrays Whites as being greedy criminals saying, "I don't want to get jumped by any of these rich White folks" (Ratner, 2001). The one case of Hispanic stereotyping occurs when Carter generalizes that the woman knows "Pedro Morales Magonzales Morotto Malosso Megusto" as he completely stereotypes a Hispanic name. The French are mostly portrayed negatively as the commissioner and the taxi driver are unwelcoming and judgmental of Americans. Yet they are portrayed positively as the taxi driver diverts from the norm, shooting the bad guy and saving Carter and Lee.

Purpose of the Stereotypes

The main uses of the stereotypes are for humor with 84 incidents being used for comedic purposes (See Table 8). Three incidents of stereotypes were used for transitions, in which music or songs are stereotypical for a race. Only 35 stereotyped incidents are used to move the plot along or accentuate a character as a plot point.

Table 8: Distribution of purpose for each stereotype

	Purpose Rush Hour 1	Purpose Rush Hour 2	Purpose Rush Hour 3	Total
Humor	20	37	27	84
Plot Point	11	12	12	35
Transition	2	0	1	3

V. Conclusion

This study sought to identify how the *Rush Hour* films used and manipulated stereotypes. The *Rush Hour* trilogy all featured more stereotypes of Asians than any other ethnicities. Each film portrayed more positive and negative stereotypes of Asians than any other ethnicities. Whites were overwhelmingly portrayed as negative in regards to their moral shortcomings. All ethnicities had more negative stereotypes than positive ones. Most of the stereotypes identified were for humor rather than for the plot. The number of stereotypes has increased in the seguels but the most stereotypes occurred in *Rush Hour 2*.

The *Rush Hour* trilogy is groundbreaking in many ways. Even though the three films contain more than one hundred stereotypes, they featured two heroes of a minority background, which is a unique instance in Hollywood films. While most of the stereotypes were negative, the film did portray the minority duo in a positive light, as the two individuals were the heroes of the day. In the films the two minorities overcame their stereotypes and created a new norm. For example in *Rush Hour 3*, Lee ate fried chicken and watched an African documentary while Carter ate Chinese takeout and watched the Asian boy in *Indiana Jones*. The characters may have played into their stereotypes, but they also showed that the stereotypes can be broken. In doing so, the films did what social identity theory proposes: Forming new roles for each ethnicity to identify with while exaggerating current stereotypes.

The films were able to cover stereotypes of multiple ethnicities; however, some ethnicities were targeted more than others. Whites featured in the films were mainly portrayed negatively as the cruel, greedy white male. One could argue that this negative portrayal could be balanced out with the overwhelming White majority and star power in Hollywood. African Americans received many positive and negative stereotypes in the trilogy. Tucker's character, with his loud talking and trouble-making nature, only perpetuated the stereotypical happy-go-lucky Negro of early 1900s Hollywood films. Yet Tucker was able to break away from the "White gatekeepers" that limit African Americans in today's films, as the only Whites in the film were supporting characters or villains. Nishime argued that Asians now act as those gatekeepers, but in each film Lee relied on Carter to rescue him.

Asians in the *Rush Hour* films continued to follow the stereotypes of current and past Hollywood films. Chan's character matched the modern day stereotype of Asians as hardworking, responsible, and honorable. Yet there were instances in which Asians in the films revert back to the yellow-peril days. Each film has an Asian villain who is cruel, crazy and evil reflecting the Asian stereotypical character of Fu Manchu. Analysis of stereotypes can be subjective as in a case where Carter took Lee to Chinatown and showed him John Wayne's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. It may be a coincidence, but John Wayne's career is forever marked by his role as Ghengis Khan in *The Conqueror*. As the Telegraph Film wrote, "Wayne was transformed into an Asian with makeup and fake eyelids. He was also told to grow a Fu Manchu style moustache. There you go: unmistakably Mongolian" ("Movie," 2015). Wayne is historically famous for this role as audiences were critical of his portrayal of an Asian, especially since he continued to use his famous Western accent. Of all the stars to show Lee on the Walk of Fame, Carter specifically chose to show him Wayne.

While the films perpetuate a number of stereotypes, most of the stereotypes are generalizations exaggerated for comedic reasons. The film communicates them mostly through dialogue and behaviors for humor and does include positive stereotypes that divert from the norm. One study concluded from a focus group that "racial audiences enjoy racial jokes and humor in comedy and are also more inclined to see truth in racial stereotypes than to cast doubt on them" (Park et al., 2006, P.173). The findings of this study can contribute to the discussion of the offensiveness of the films.

The *Rush Hour* trilogy influenced numerous other biracial action comedies and led to the recent creation of the *Rush Hour* television show on CBS. Scholars can now use this coding and compare and contrast the different ways other biracial action comedies use stereotypes. It may also be worth comparing the films with the television series to see in what ways the same stereotypes are perpetuated or adapted. Since identifying the stereotypes is subjective, one coder is not desirable, a limitation to this study.

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Influence of Advertising During the Great Depression

Kate Nichols

Strategic Communications and Journalism Elon University

Abstract

The 1930s—a decade rife with poverty, unemployment, and rationing—was not known for its flourishing economy and successful business endeavors in America. This study investigated the influence of advertising on consumerism during the Great Depression, attempting to uncover what advertising strategies were most effective. It compared American Tobacco Company's rising and falling advertising investment throughout the 1930s with company profits to identify if advertising influenced company prosperity. When a direct correlation was present, this study investigated what advertising techniques were used. The information is useful in studies of advertising during recessions.

I. Introduction

The 1930s was an era not known for its flourishing economy and successful business endeavors in America. Instead, poverty, unemployment, and rationing largely defined this period. Ciment (1997) described that the national income "fell from \$87.8 billion in 1929 to \$75.7 billion in 1930, before dropping to just \$42.5 billion in 1932" (p. 11). This period saw major setbacks and fiscal tragedy, and as a result, consumerism and various industry profits were greatly depleted (Marchand 1985). Advertisers, struggling for new media strategies, became involved in a frantic battle of "fierce competition and aggressive selling," as they worked against each other for the public's last few dollars (McGovern, 2006, p. 224). Johnson (2010) also noted that companies tried several different advertising tactics; yet without the correct moves, companies would and did falter (p. 1).

The current study investigated the historical relevance of print media and its influence on consumerism during the 1930s. It aimed to unveil which advertising strategies were most effective during this period of economic hardship and American turmoil by examining the campaign tactics, advertising spending, and annual reports of one company that has thrived since the 1930s: the American Tobacco Company.

Ultimately, this study tried to describe exactly how one major corporation advertised its products to consumers during a period of economic hardship, particularly during "the deepest and longest-lasting economic downturn in the history of the Western industrialized world" ("Great Depression," 2009, p. 1).

Advertising in the 1930s is a unique topic to the advertising and communications fields, but not much research has been conducted on this topic, especially examining what was effective for particular corporations. This paper builds on previous research on the success of various advertising campaigns from the American Tobacco Company throughout the 1930s.

Keywords: advertising, Great Depression, American Tobacco Company, annual reports, advertising strategies Email: knichols3@elon.edu

This undergraduate project was conducted as a partial requirement of a research course in communications.

II. Literature

This literature review begins with factors that contributed to increasing or maintaining profits during the Great Depression. Afterward, it examined past successful studies that tried to measure particular campaigns and their advertisements' effectiveness. While more than 100,000 companies closed their doors between 1929 and 1933, Ciment (2001) noted that advertising was still prevalent throughout the Great Depression, as several campaign strategies continued to promote company growth (p. XV). This research focuses on the advertising techniques that led to consumer consumption during this decade. McGovern (2006) and Marchand (1985) listed a number of common advertising tactics during the Great Depression, including sensationalism, advertisements to boost the credibility of the advertising industry itself, screaming headlines, escapism, and product placement.

Of the advertising methods mentioned above, sensationalism was noted as a particularly controversial tactic, as consumers in the 1930s bonded over their frustration with ad agencies and their manipulative selling strategies, thus creating a consumer movement. According to McGovern (2006), during this period "an open debate between advertisers and consumerists" developed due to clashing views on economy, society and culture" (pp. 253-260). This well-known and "previously taboo" marketing strategy included over-the-top designs and displays, as well as overdramatized product facts and claims. Due to "fierce competition," aggressive selling in the form of sensationalism became a common advertising strategy during this era of financial setback (p. 225).

With skepticism surrounding the advertising industry coming to the surface in the midst of the Great Depression, another common ad strategy was "forced selling." According to McGovern (2006), forced selling was a term dubbed by ad men to imply that advertisers at the time felt obligated to force their industry presence onto consumers. During a time when there was doubt surrounding the advertising industry and their manipulative selling tactics, this method revolved around the notion of figuratively selling advertising agencies themselves, defining their fundamental principles, "sound values," confidence and honor. In an effort to garner public acceptance of the field, ad agencies advocated their own businesses, hoping that consumers would respect their selling strategies, previously seen as manipulative, as a genuine business practice (McGovern 2006, p. 253-60).

Young-Witzel and Witzel (2002) indicated further that screaming headlines rose to the forefront of several advertising campaigns during the Depression and onwards when the fight for consumer spending was critical to companies' survival. McGovern (2006) indicated that during these years, competition and aggressive selling evolved into the practice of using "the attraction power of advertising with extra big type [and] trick photography" (p. 225). Sensationalism and screaming headlines became the norm during this period, as advertisers felt "soft-sell" tactics were no longer effectively promoting mass consumer spending, and in turn looked to hard-sells, or the notion of selling to the consumer "by any means" (p. 225).

Ciment (2001) described other techniques, such as escapism, as also having been introduced during these periods when consumers, obviously financially drained by the repercussions of these decades of economic setback, sought life outside of the ordinary. Prominent as a technique during the 1930s, "the rags-to-riches story that portrayed a nation in which everyone was rich or about to become rich routinely appeared in numerous books, magazines, newspapers, and photo-magazines like *Colliers* and *Saturday Evening Post*" (p. 49). Advertisers were now able to use the newfound interest and success of motion pictures, which portrayed stories of better times, to alleviate the tension of the Depression and–more importantly–as a marketing tool (Young-Witzel & Witzel, 2002; Ciment, 2001; and Marchand, 1985). The wide scope of information readily available on the most common advertising methods of the time added weight to the discussion of this topic. Yet, the studies did not specify each tactic's effectiveness in generating profits or arousing consumer interest.

Marchard (1985) referenced product placement as a common advertising tactic during the 1930s (pp. 110-116). The method was called a "hypnotic trance" with readers, who were automatically more interested in consumer goods conveniently residing next to their favorite celebrity both onscreen and in print (p. 112). Watters (1978) regarded billboards as a major advertising theme during the 1930s when growing car sales led more people to read the large signs (p. 286).

Looking particularly at the cigarette industry, Gardner and Brandt (2006) and Cigarettes (2003) identified common advertising tactics specific to the American Tobacco Company. These scholars introduced background information and statistical evidence on Americans, their tobacco buying habits, and the influence

of advertising of the time. They each listed doctors' testimonials and celebrity endorsement as common advertising tactics for the industry. This information proved useful in this research because the American Tobacco Company's advertising tactics of the times were compared to the more popular tactics of the industry.

To measure the effectiveness of these many advertising methods, a small number of studies were reviewed. Voss (2009) and Krishnamurthy (2000), for instance, analyzed the campaigns of one or two major companies and their strategies. These two authors did address the historical background and produced figures that proved some degree of success that a campaign launch brought to each corresponding company. The analysis of these two studies further suggested that measuring advertising effectiveness for specific companies would necessitate specific quantifiable figures as evidentiary support for further research.

To examine the effectiveness of certain advertising methods, one has to operationalize and measure "effectiveness." The study by Wells (1997) used three different factors when it looked at the effectiveness of the company Royal Appliance's advertising tactics from the 1990s: advertising and promotion expenditures; annual sales of the company; and the company's market share. Modeling after Wells' study, the current study used the same three components to analyze the effectiveness of advertising in the 1930s.

In order to establish a clear focus and direction, the study developed three research questions:

- RQ1: During this time of economic hardship, did companies use advertising campaigns to continue to promote products in some way?
- RQ2: In the midst of this era of fiscal tragedy, what were the strategies that advertisers used in print to advocate consumerism?
- RQ3: And lastly, what were the most effective and successful tactics utilized by advertisers, and why?

III. Methods

The case study can be traced back about 2,500 years to the Greeks who employed basic observations to study events and issues in history. This study approaches primary media documents, one corporation's annual reports, and historical company analyses as the sources of information. All of these primary artifacts are searched in their entirety because no other methods cannot capture a complete picture of the relationship between companies' advertising and the events taking place within society (Zhou & Sloan, 2011, p. 245-46). This study analyzes each year's annual report figures and company history during the 1930s.

To address the presence of advertising strategies and the effectiveness of certain methods, historical research methods are implemented. After looking at the differing advertising strategies commonly used during the 1930s, this study develops a case study revolving around one particular company, the American Tobacco Company. The study analyzes the company's varying levels of success through primary documents, such as corporation annual reports and media publications in the 1930s. In addition, this research consults secondary historical works that addressed directly the American Tobacco Company's advertising campaigns and, in some cases, its rationale for using certain strategies. This research project analyzes the effectiveness of its various campaigns during the 1930s by 1) seeking out correlations between profit and advertising figures from company historical annual reports and 2) analyzing its histories and reports of advertising campaign successes during the 1930s.

Annual Reports Analysis

To measure a campaign's success, this study first compares the company's profits during the years when major advertising campaigns were introduced and were subsequently maintained and developed. It then compares the amount of profits with what was invested in "goodwill," a term at the time used synonymously with "advertising" investment. If, for instance, profits and goodwill figures increased significantly at the same time when a new campaign was introduced, it may be concluded that a particular campaign's influence led to more consumer purchases, and therefore a success for the company. Profit figures are also compared with unemployment figures, product launches, and other factors that reports claim may have also influenced the sales at the time.

Campaigns and Advertisements Studied

This study investigates the effectiveness of each major campaign introduced by the American Tobacco Company during the 1930s, as indicated by company histories and historical reports. Companies ran as many ads as possible within its budget. In some cases that number ran into the hundreds, perhaps thousands. The enormous number of advertisements from each campaign led this study to limit its analysis to only the advertisements that epitomized the campaign. These ads are selected by checking descriptions of popular advertisements of the time and by seeking out print ads that maintained consistent messaging and encompassed the major theme of the campaign as described in historical company analyses and annual reports.

Company Histories and Reports of Campaign Success

Historical references to the American Tobacco Company's advertising campaigns are readily accessible. Analysis of the company's documents related to advertising campaigns in the 1930s—especially statistical evidence that the company provides—offers insights into the success of its respective advertising efforts. This campaign material offers support that particular advertising strategies aided the company's recovery and vitality during this decade of fiscal distress. Because tobacco products are not an essential everyday need, the author investigates the American Tobacco Company for insights into how it promoted consumerism during a time of restricted national spending. The company was one of leading tobacco corporation during the 1930s.

Print as the Medium

The 1930s in America may have supported the burgeoning innovation of radio and alternative advertising platforms, yet during this decade print remained the principal vehicle for companies' advertising. Newspaper saturation remained at more than 100 percent, meaning the number of newspapers sold each day exceeded the number of American households, and magazine circulation topped 125 million in the United States in the years following the Depression (Dizard, 1994, p. 157). Newspaper and magazine ads together pulled in about 70 cents of every advertising dollar spent in the United States in the 1930s (Young &Young, 2002, p. 162). While radio was highly popular for entertainment and news, it still did not provide total penetration into American society the way that print media did—nor did advertisers spend as much over the airwaves, just 3 cents per advertising dollar in 1930 (p. 162). In addition, it is impossible to measure the effectiveness of radio advertisement unless historical radio shows from this time period are available and completely compiled. Since print has been preserved, this study focused on advertisements and company campaigns through this longstanding outlet for reaching consumers.

IV. Findings

American Tobacco Company Findings

The most prevalent advertising campaigns during the Depression era for the American Tobacco Company were the concepts of 1) product claims and statistics and 2) celebrity endorsement. Unlike other industries of the time, smoking corporations maintained success during a period when consumerism was at an all-time low. The American Tobacco Company, therefore, is an example of a corporation within a relatively successful industry at the time, whose main focus, then, was to lure customers away from major competitors. The American Tobacco Company, like most all other companies, saw declining profits during the worst years of the Depression; hence, the corporation shied away from offering information on the individual years of 1935-37 by lumping all three-year figures into one report. However, its sales increased for most of the 1930s, probably due to rigorous advertising products, such as Lucky Strike, which spent \$19 million in advertising in 1930 (Cigarettes, 2003). It increased money allotted to its advertising budget by more than 53 percent in 1930 over the preceding year, immediately pulling sales from other major competitors and making Lucky Strike the No. 1 cigarette brand in the United States ("Cigarette Figures," 1938).

Outside Factors that should be considered in Reports

As various historical sources indicate, decreasing sales for companies in the 1930s was caused by the Great Depression. According to The Great Depression (2016), 1932 and 1933 were the worst years of the Depression, followed by 1934 when the economy slowly started to recover. This general economic trend was reflected in individual companies. The American Tobacco Company saw its biggest dip in sales and profits from 1932 to 1933, and a slightly less dramatic decline in profits in 1934 ("Great Depression," 2016). For the rest of the decade, the company saw rather rebounding profits, further highlighting the severe hit the Depression delivered to the economy from 1932 to 1934.

Product Claims and Statistics

In an effort to stand out from competitors during the Great Depression, the American Tobacco Company used product claims and physician testimonials as its predominant advertising strategy in the 1930s. Facing "rising public anxiety about the health risks of cigarette smoking," the company launched a major campaign featuring different doctors citing Lucky Strike specifically, as well as some of its lesser-known brands, as their cigarette of choice. The company included statistics in its ads, such as "20,670 Physicians say 'Luckies are less irritating'" to prove that its cigarettes were the ones to purchase (Gardner & Brandt, 2006). Before the stock market crash, the American Tobacco Company was "the leader in the splashy ad campaigns that had made its Lucky Strike brand dominant by the late 1920s," and just a few years later, Lucky Strike became the first to mention physicians in advertisements (Gardner & Brandt, 2006). This soon became a common advertising technique used by all major cigarette brands. The company innovatively promoted its products with doctor testimonials and screaming headlines. By this time, it also promoted its products more aggressively than any major cigarette company, making it, as one historical analysis notes, "the preeminent brand largely because of its massive promotional efforts" (Gardner & Brandt, 2006).

Wharton (2008) noted that companies were successful when they maintained and even further boosted their advertising during this time. The American Tobacco Company is one example for which this is true. The company saw an increase in sales throughout most all unconsolidated years in the 1930s, and the company's advertising expenditure figures remained steady at \$54 million ("American Tobacco," 1929-1939). The company's annual reports repeatedly mentioned that "at all times the Company has supported and vitalized the value of this item (good will) through its consistent advertising. This item-the investment in product Good Will over the years-actually constitutes the Company's most valuable continuing asset" ("American Tobacco," 1929-1939). It should also be noted that during this period, the company's most sought after brand, Lucky Strike, had the highest profit share figures among all cigarette products in the industry, probably due to the company's investment in goodwill as a thriving asset ("Cigarette Figures," 1938).

The "It's Toasted" slogan was introduced in 1917 as another way to gain a consumer following away from competitors. Around the 1930s, when all cigarette companies claimed that their products provide smokers with pleasure, the American Tobacco Company felt the need to set itself apart. The brand used its already established slogan that claimed that its cigarettes were "toasted," instead of sun-dried; therefore, they caused less irritation than others. Specifically, the company marketed this slogan in the 1930s by placing the slogan alongside physician testimonials that aimed to validate the brand's claims of having cigarettes with less irritation (Gardner & Brandt, 2006). While some, if not all, cigarettes on the market were toasted before production, the Lucky Strike brand set itself apart by highlighting this fact in its 1930s campaigns. This technique of utilizing a simple slogan to set itself apart was even mentioned in the critically acclaimed American television series *Mad Men*. Although "Lucky Strikes' curing process did not significantly differ from that of other brands," according to Gardner and Brandt (2006), the slogan quickly became well known among consumers. Physicians advocating the brand may have also led the Lucky Strike brand to develop a sort of "cult following" and become the top selling cigarette in the United States in the 1930s.

Celebrity Endorsement

To increase cigarette smoking in the 1930s, the American Tobacco Company, as well as other cigarette makers, turned to celebrity endorsement as a huge component of advertising campaigns.

The American Tobacco Company led its rivals with this trend during this Depression era, taking on the

likes of *The Jazz Singer* star Al Jolson as the face of Lucky Strike. By 1937 and 1938, "American Tobacco was paying to have a long list of Hollywood stars to appear in its ads." These advertisements were said to give validity to certain cigarette brands, and for that reason, American Tobacco was not alone in its hefty investment in celebrity endorsement (Lum et al., 2008). A star's average payment "ranged in value, in 2008 dollars, generally from \$40,000 to \$140,000 for each endorsement" (Doyle, 2010).

Major celebrities the American Tobacco Company paid for endorsements included Gary Cooper, Claudette Colbert, Joan Crawford, Henry Fonda, Bob Hope, Carole Lombard, Ray Milland, Robert Montgomery, Richard Powell, George Raft, Edward G. Robinson, Barbara Stanwyck, Gloria Swanson, Robert Taylor, Spencer Tracy, and Jane Wyatt (Lum et al., 2008).

Celebrity endorsements during this period also made cigarettes relevant to women of the time. Female celebrity figures, such as Barbara Stanwyck and Jane Wyatt, were approached to promote the glamour surrounding cigarette brands, as described by Stanford Research (2016): "Often turning to chic celebrities to hawk their products, relying on their trendsetting ways to make the sell." Male celebrities, including George Raft and Spencer Tracy were also featured, all depicted in ads as celebrities are today, suggesting to consumers that these public figures use these products and, therefore, they should, too. Using celebrities as part of major American Tobacco Company campaigns probably created success especially from 1937-38, when celebrity endorsement was on the rise for the brand. During that time, operating profits increased as the company poured more of its dollars into its advertising budget—an increase by \$2 million (Doyle, 2010). The American Tobacco Company launched the nation's top cigarette brand based on its advertising campaigns and increased its sales. Other tobacco companies replicated its advertising methods during the 1930s (Gardner & Brandt, 2006).

V. Conclusions

During the 1930s, the American Tobacco Company recorded consistent profits with the exception of 1931; Lucky Strike maintained its place as the most purchased tobacco product on the market throughout the Great Depression. The company credited its steady advertising revenue figures as a company asset of continued "great value" in relation to its rising profits ("American Tobacco," 1929-1939). Lucky Strike's market share indicates that advertising might have greatly influenced sales during a time when consumer spending was at an all-time low ("Cigarette Figures," 1938). Product claims seen with the "It's Toasted" slogan and physician testimonials, as well as celebrities' endorsements, financially benefitted the company.

Several major themes about advertising and marketing during economically ailing years in American history emerge from this study. This research suggests that tobacco companies during the Great Depression—at least the one included in this case study—maintained an advertising agenda regardless of the political, social, or economic conditions the country faced and succeeded in the sale of nonessential commodities. Literature review showed that the following advertising techniques were used during the period of this study: sensationalism, self-promotion (McGovern, 2006), screaming headlines (Young-Witzel & Witzel, 2002), product description (Marchand, 1985), escapism (Ciment, 2001), product placement, and celebrity endorsement (McGovern, 2006). According to this case study, the most successful tactics are product description and celebrity endorsement.

Among common advertising methods used by both flourishing and faltering companies of the 1930s, this study found which techniques worked for one booming, non-essential item brand, American Tobacco: 1) product description, and 2) celebrity endorsement.

Product Description

Product description is an advertising tactic widely used by the American Tobacco Company during the 1930s. These ads included claims that competitors' goods were unmatchable to said ACT's better, more advanced products. Examples of innovative product description include the American Tobacco Company's slogan "It's Toasted," which emphasized that unlike competitors' tobacco goods, Lucky Strike caused less irritation due to its toasting methods. While Lucky Strike wasn't the only cigarette brand that toasted their products, the American Tobacco Company promoted this feature and became known by this slogan. This slogan, which was used by the brand for decades, is widely recognized by the public and may have led to the company's unbeatable market share throughout the Great Depression (Gardner & Brandt, 2006).

Celebrity endorsement is another common advertising tactic of the time, which was found in historical works and confirmed by this case study. The company saw huge hikes in sales as they invested funds in celebrity endorsements in print, and it could be regarded to be effective since all major tobacco companies followed suit in years to come.

This study identified the most effective advertising methods of the 1930s by studying one corporation. This task was completed through a case study analysis focusing on "effectiveness." Analyses of other corporations focusing on their effectiveness may provide a bigger picture. It would be possible for researchers to find different measurements of "effectiveness."

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A Case Study of Comedian Hannibal Buress and Humor as an Agent for Change

Frankie Campisano

Media Arts & Entertainment Elon University

Abstract

Comedian Hannibal Buress was launched into the national spotlight after a YouTube clip of his stand-up routine went viral in October 2014. In the clip, Buress addressed the sexual assault allegations against Bill Cosby, fueling renewed interest in the case in the public eye, leading to Cosby's arrest in December 2015. This case study examined the material in Buress' stand-up comedy specials to contextualize the clip and determine which classical theories of humor his work employs, as well as persuasive methods used to engage audiences and address sociopolitical subject matter.

I. Introduction

Within the past five years, stand-up comedian, writer, and actor Hannibal Buress has hurtled toward the pantheon of modern comedy A-Listers, with Buress' act being compared to critical and commercial darlings Louis C.K. and Aziz Ansari, as well as Dave Chappelle, Chris Rock, and other incisive Black comics (Zinoman, 2011). While his resume includes stints writing for both *Saturday Night Live* and *30 Rock* and supporting roles on cult-television hits *Broad City* and *The Eric Andre Show*, Buress inadvertently found himself in the national spotlight and the subject of major media scrutiny only after an online clip from a performance in Philadelphia in October 2014 went viral (Hsu, 2015). In the clip, Buress criticizes actor and comedian Bill Cosby for his seemingly conflated image as a moralistic, elder statesman for the Black community in light of 13 allegations of sexual assault at the time of the performance.

"Thirteen? And it's even worse because Bill Cosby has the fucking smuggest, old Black man public persona that I hate. Just gets on TV; 'Pull your pants up, Black people, I was on TV in the '80s! I can talk down to you because I had a successful sitcom!' Yeah, but you raped women, Bill Cosby. So, brings you down a couple notches. 'I don't curse on stage!' Well, yeah, you're a rapist, so, I'll take you sayin' lots of 'motherfucker's on Bill Cosby: Himself if you weren't a rapist . . . I want to just at least make it weird for you to watch Cosby Show reruns. Dude's image, for the most part, is public, teflon image. I've

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Email: Fcampisano@elon.edu

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done this bit on stage, and people don't believe it. People think I'm making it up . . . If you didn't know about it, trust me. You leave here and google 'Bill Cosby rape.' It ain't funny. That shit has more results than 'Hannibal Buress'" (Eye Sight, 2014).

The joke had been a part of Buress' act for approximately six months by the time it was filmed and uploaded to YouTube by user 'eye sight,' but the clip skyrocketed Buress further into the limelight while simultaneously reigniting the controversial Cosby case for both the media and the general public. In the wake of the coverage of Buress' call-out, many other accusers stepped forward, leading to Cosby being charged and arrested for sexual assault in December 2015 (Elber). Speaking at a Television Critics Association event in January 2016 to promote his first special since the incident, Buress stated he was merely "doing a joke in my show and that shouldn't influence public opinion. I don't know if it should go that far. It's weird to me that a joke did that" (Elber).

While he downplays the role his joke had in the situation, Buress' material undoubtedly *did* influence public opinion, eroding the very same 'teflon image' of Cosby that the joke was deriding. One joke, which was never formally released aside from fan recordings uploaded online, set off a chain of events that irrevocably altered the image of Cosby in the American pop culture landscape and called into question the public's tendency to overlook heinous crimes when committed by beloved celebrities. Buress claims that he told the joke without intending repercussions for Cosby, but less than two minutes of on-stage riffing permanently shifted the zeitgeist for both Buress and Cosby alike (Raymer, 2015). The Cosby bit and its ensuing media frenzy led some, including *GQ*'s Taffy Brodesser-Akner, to label Buress "a feminist hero" during an interview. Buress does not readily embrace the label; however, he claims his only prerogative is to be funny. But as Brodesser-Akner (2015) points out in the *GQ* profile piece, Buress' "main comedic jam is parsing things people say and do and then correcting them . . . Buress is like the smart-aleck kid brother who harps on your every error and hyperbolic moment, and who would be insufferable if he weren't incredibly funny."

Stand-up comedy, as an art form, is in a unique rhetorical position where the rules and taboos otherwise imposed on communication are temporarily suspended. Humor has a powerful potency as a persuasive tool, and beyond the old adage that it is only the court jester who can get away with criticizing a king, there is a scholastic and societal merit to understanding how humor can act as an agent for cultural change (Martin, 2007). And while Buress may not be a comedian with an overtly sociopolitical agenda, time and time again his material veers toward loftier subject matter, taking seemingly innocuous or outlandish premises and addressing issues of race, sex, and gender, the American political landscape, and cultural obsessions with drugs, alcohol, and violence. It's only because of his comedic skill that his carefully crafted bits can weave salient political points and poignant morality into his narratives, all the while giving off an air of spontaneity.

Through the veil of humor, comedians like Buress are able to get on a soapbox and influence the masses. In order to understand Buress' act and the influence he may have on his audience, it is necessary to understand the history and evolution of American stand-up comedy, particularly the subgenre known as 'charged humor,' as well as having operational working knowledge of the classical, sociological theories of humor and the nuanced, persuasive techniques employed by the performing comedian.

II. Literature

In order to contextualize the works of Buress, one must first understand the three classical theories of humor, which explain how the material elicits the desired audience response of laughter. One must also understand the rhetorical methods employed when humor is used as a persuasive device, as well as the sociological role of the stand-up comedian. Then, to understand Buress' work in the canon of American stand-up comedy, one must understand the history and evolution of the art form, as well as having an understanding of Buress' comic persona.

Theories of Humor

The three primary sociological theories of humor, collectively referred to as the classical theories of humor, suggest that comedy could be traced to three distinct types of interactions. There are other fringe theories of humor, but the universality of the three classical theories makes them prime focuses for research.

The relief theory suggests humor is drawn from the build-up and release of tension, often as a defense mechanism, in order for a speaker to vent or explore deeper feelings they might not otherwise be willing to address. The relief theory accounts for exposing vulnerabilities, the way one can find humor in situations that might otherwise be stressful, tragic or flat out unfunny (Sen, 2012). Relief theory accounts for the old idiom that laughter is the best medicine, as well as offering an explanation, via an expression of relief from stress, as to why one laughs when tickled (Lynch, 2002).

The superiority theory suggests humor relies on one party using ridicule, derision, or other put-downs to raise the speaker to an elevated position while drawing attention to the weaknesses, fallacies, and other drawbacks of a particular target or opponent (Dadlez, 2011). Self-deprecating humor can also fit the superiority theory, as one targets oneself in order to deflect attention from a point of weakness before another party targets the speaker in turn (Lynch, 2002). Superiority theory is one of the earliest humor theories, and in order for it to be employed successfully, the target of the humor must be established as inferior according to agreed upon (whether explicitly or implicitly) in-group/out-group social criteria (Sen, 2012). The superiority theory was supported by the writings of Plato and Aristotle, but is most often credited in its modern form to Hobbes, who wrote in The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic that "the passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly" (Hobbes, 1994). In other words, superiority theory involves building oneself up at the expense of another, or at the expense of oneself in the case of self-effacing humor (Dadlez, 2011).

The incongruity theory relies on contradictions and incongruences in both the content and subject matter of the humorous message as well as the means by which that message is communicated to an audience. This theory accounts for the notion of ridiculousness, the exasperated reaction of incredulity one experiences in situations that seem irreconcilable with usual circumstances (Sen, 2012). The incongruity theory plays heavily on subverting one's expectations in the case of stand-up comedy either by the comedians themselves doing or saying something unexpected, or by the subject of a joke initially being presented in a particular light as one thing, and then, through the course of the joke, being revealed to be something different than what the audience had been led to believe or expect. The inherent humor of incongruity theory relies on the initial realization of the incongruence, or ridiculousness, as well as its resolution, typically in the form of addressing how and why the ridiculousness is outside the norm (Lynch, 2002).

When the classical theories of humor were first being developed and researched, scholars looked at each independently, believing there could be a singular, comprehensive theory explaining why and how we find humorous material to be funny. More modern approaches look to synthesize the three different theories as different means of approaching the same goal (Sen, 2012). In many cases, a comedian could make use of all three classical theories in a single joke in an effort to make the audience laugh. Most often, superiority and incongruity theories overlap and interplay in the same context (Dadlez, 2011).

Humor as a Persuasive Device

In Lynch's study of humor in the context of communications research, humor, especially in the context of stand-up comedy, is in its essence a message communicated from one party to another, with the implicit psychological motivation of entertaining the receiver. But whether the message is successful is dependent on the receiver's understanding of the humorous message, which adds a social context and function for comedy that cannot be dismissed.

Lyttle's (2001) research into humor as a persuasive device found three methods of persuasion theory utilizing humor to convey a message and achieve a desired outcome with an intended audience. Lyttle's research found that humor can create a positive mood for the audience, making them less likely to disagree with the content of a persuasive message, that humor in the form of ironic wisecracks and sarcasm can distract from potential counterarguments to the persuasion, and that self-effacing humor can improve the credibility of its source by suggesting the source is being more honest by exposing vulnerabilities, thereby improving the persuasive effects of the message.

In Nabi et al.'s (2007) study of the persuasive effect of humorous messages pertaining to social issues, it was found that past studies have attempted to quantify "humor's potentially unique ability to encourage consideration of positions that might otherwise be dismissed or ignored were humor not present to capture attention" (p. 31). But the scientific nature of the results is strenuous, considering the subjective nature of comedy. The study also found that the more naturalistic and conversational the context humor is presented in, the more effective its persuasive message can be. This is because the humor not only hooks the audience, but also keeps the audience enthralled longer. Nabi's study noted that past research often found that humorous messages can be a double-edged sword, with the humorous message's persuasive effect diminished by its potential to be dismissed as merely a joke. To counteract this potential pitfall, Nabi suggests, "The conclusion of a humorous message should reestablish serious intent. This would short-circuit the minimizing effect of discounting while still maintaining the benefit of the close information processing generated by entertaining messages" (pp. 50-51). Nabi also found that audience members who dismiss a message as a joke in the moment may retain the information, and after a gestation period it could potentially influence or alter their views after having had more time to process the message's content. The research found that "humor may have paved the way for attitude change by indirectly reducing counterargument and enhancing argument quality perceptions" (p. 39).

The Role of the Comedian and the Sociology of Humor

Stand-up comedy is an essential, though often overlooked, part of society. Mintz (1985) believes that stand-up "is arguably the oldest, most universal, basic and deeply significant form of humorous expression . . . performing essentially the same social and cultural roles in practically every known society, past, and present" and its roots can be traced back to more primitive forms as part of live theatrical performances, circuses, vaudeville, and burlesque. It is only in recent history that stand-up has come to take on a more immediately recognizable form, but even that has developed and changed with each passing generation of comedians. Eras in stand-up are defined by the biggest working comedians, who set the tone, and influence those who come after. (Mintz, 1985). The comedian takes on a role with a grander purpose than to simply fire off punch lines; the comedian is, as Mintz puts it, "our comic spokesperson [and] mediator, an 'articulator' of our culture, and as our contemporary anthropologist" (p. 75).

Mintz (1985) attests that humor is the most revealing facet of a society, a cultural cornerstone that can be placed under sociological and anthropological lenses to tell us about the values, traditions, opinions, and contradictions of a particular people. Humor can reaffirm public opinion or reinforce common beliefs or accepted societal norms, but it can also take those same standardizations and shine a fresh light on them, surprising audiences by opening new lines of inquiry on seemingly familiar material. Jokes can be agents of chaos, using hyperbolic distortions of truth and reality to foster a fictionalized narrative for pure entertainment purposes, or they can be used to unite an audience under a shared notion, viewpoint, or ingroup. Subconsciously grouping the individual members of the audience together as a cohesive collective is the reason comedians often begin their sets by working the room, addressing the crowd as a unified entity and testing the waters through the audience response and interactions to the comedian's opening statements. (Mintz, 1985).

A History of American Stand-Up Comedy

The earliest inklings of stand-up comedy in America, at least in a form recognizable when compared to its present-day incarnation, can be traced to late 19th century forms of entertainment including vaudeville, minstrel shows, circus clowns, and humorous speeches and monologues from clever performers. These performers were branded as "humorists" rather than comedians, notably including Mark Twain, whose works have stood the test of time more so than any of his contemporaries. In these early forms, these precursors to comedians, including "jugglers, contortionists, regurgitators, tumblers, ventriloquists, animal acts, minstrels, sketch artists, and musicians," performed a myriad of performances as part of variety shows (Krefting, 2014, p. 38).

By the 1950s, stand-up had begun "moving away from traditional jokes both in formula and content. Instead of the standard set-up and punch line, then repeat," trends shifted in favor of comedians who told narratives with humor woven throughout, a style that allowed performers to build a rapport with their audience members, who were given the impression that the comedian's act was a window into their personal lives (Krefting, 2014). As the art form developed, it began to take on features that, while staples of today's stand-up

comedy, were quite novel in the 1950s, particularly comedians who would directly address members of the audience in conversation, using brief question-and-answer sessions as grounds for improvisational humor (Krefting, 2014).

In the 1950s and 1960s, comedy began to become an outlet for some to satirize culture and society, lampooning, at its core, the social contracts adopted in one way or another by most, if not all, members of society. Some comedians pushed more boundaries in regards to subject matter and adult language, with comedian Lenny Bruce garnering a reputation for being arrested for performing his raunchy material (Maslon, 2008). This trend continued into the 1970s, with some of the most successful comedians, like George Carlin and Richard Pryor, becoming stars in their own right by doubling down on the obscenity-ridden style of Bruce. The antithesis to these more vulgar comics were family-friendly names like Bill Cosby and Steve Martin, who were able to use their wider appeal to successfully crossover into other art forms, particularly television and film (Krefting, 2014).

But outside of the biggest names in the business, stand-up comedians were struggling to make ends meet. In the late 1970s, most mid-level and rookie comedians performed solely for exposure, rather than pay. Comedian Tom Dreesen took action in March 1979 and formed a union, the Comedians for Compensation, with other working comedians, to protest The Comedy Store in Los Angeles, California. Dreesen's union went on strike for six weeks, and garnered support from many of the biggest names in the business, which ultimately led Comedy Store owner Mitzi Shore to agree to pay \$25 for each performance. Despite the settlement, this new standard was not regularly enforced, which opened the door for other venues to standardize their wages and attract performers (Krefting, 2014). There were typically three levels of comedians: an opener, a feature, and the headliner. These newfound standards led to a proliferation of comedy clubs, even some chains, which spread across the United States.

By the mid 1980s, stand-up comedy had gone from being a career with little-to-no stability or chance at upward mobility to one where working comedians could support themselves and make a living telling jokes. By the 1990s, live comedy performances were a staple of entertainment across the country; Comedy Central gave stand-up comedy a regular home on television; and premium cable networks like HBO and Showtime provided an additional platform for comedians in the form of hour-long specials, which became a new mark of prestige. In contrast with appearances on the late-night talk show circuit on network television, these cable specials allowed comedians to perform their material without having to censor themselves (Krefting, 2014).

The downside to the advent of Comedy Central and HBO comedy specials was that fans now had a number of alternatives to brick-and-mortar comedy clubs, which led to a slight downturn for clubs after the boom of the 1980s. By the turn of the century, particularly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, comedy entered "the age of the ironic and the age of the awkward, wherein the public finds humor in the exploration of tragedy and in moments of heightened self-consciousness" (Krefting, 2014, p. 73). This gave rise to alternative comedy, a form of humor that "was more intellectual, satirical, and even charged at times, requiring a knowledge base from audiences" and featured an "anecdotal and stream-of-consciousness style of delivery," which allowed comedians to experiment with form, content, and style in a way that was inventive, fresh, and perhaps most importantly, finding a mainstream audience (Krefting, 2014, p. 74).

The Comedy Stylings of Hannibal Buress

"Charged humor," defined by Krefting (2014) as "humor-challenging social inequality and cultural exclusion" (p. 2), challenges and subverts elements of society that the masses may take for granted at face value. As Krefting (2014) puts it, "Jokesters unmask inequality by identifying the legal arrangements and cultural attitudes and beliefs contributing to their subordinated status—joking about it, challenging that which has become normalized and compulsory, and offering new solutions and strategies" (p. 2). The challenge for comedians employing charged humor, historically, has been finding and maintaining mainstream success among audiences who often don't want the dissonance in their worldviews called into question. In order to make a living telling jokes, comedians often had to curtail more challenging subject matter in order to appeal to wider demographics and position themselves as more marketable talents. Krefting (2014) found that comedians who preferred charged humor could instead "throw in a charged zinger here and there [and] have better chances of success than others whose material is charged throughout an entire show" (p. 4).

It's to that extent that Buress makes use of charged humor, carefully and precisely choosing when to punctuate his jokes with sociopolitical subtext. In the April/May 2015 cover story of *The Fader*, Buress' infamous Bill Cosby bit is described as exemplary of his approach to comedy. "To those familiar with

Hannibal's work, the bit captured something essential about his point of view as a comic, the way his jokes rely on bemusement, skepticism, a kind of made-you-think discomfort," profiled Hua Hsu (2015, para. 9). Buress uses primarily storytelling jokes rather than directly addressing social issues. Hsu describes Buress' role as a moralistic comedian, one who is "more of a witness than a critic. His humor doesn't depict a larger social world so much as it fixates on how that world occasionally intersects with the strange contours of his own life" (Hsu, 2015, para. 27). Much like the *GQ* profile explains that it's the wit of Buress' on-stage persona that lends him the goodwill to point out uncomfortable truths, Hsu notes Buress "always maintains a quality of baffled incredulousness" (para. 27).

In a *New York Times* profile piece published three years prior to the Cosby incident, Zinoman (2011) praises Buress' subtle use of sociopolitical themes, particularly race, which in Buress' act, "is more of an implicit theme, emerging satirically . . . Mr. Buress approaches race the same way he does most subjects: from the side, with a hint of the absurd" (para. 13). Zinoman (2011) also connects Buress' success to "his distinctive delivery, which manages to sound laid back and propulsive at the same time, like a mellow stoner who speaks in the cadences of a Baptist preacher" (para. 13). In his own words, Buress describes his joke writing method as observational and procedural, explaining, "I look at stuff like a math problem and try to figure out how it works and why people do certain things and what things mean" (Raymer, 2015, para. 9). Sometimes those subjects are hyper-specific to Buress' personal life, and other times those topics have sweeping ramifications for society and pop culture at large.

III. Methods

To examine how Buress employs the classical theories of humor to influence the audience and address sociopolitical subject matter, this case study employed a content analysis based on coding material presented in Buress' stand-up routines across four major releases.

The material examined in this study includes Buress' four major stand-up specials including 2010's *My Name is Hannibal* comedy album, 2012's album and Comedy Central special *Animal Furnace*, 2014's album and Comedy Central special *Live from Chicago* and 2016's Netflix special *Comedy Camisado*, alongside the viral clip of Buress' bit on Bill Cosby from October 2014. With the exception of the Bill Cosby clip, which was evaluated first, the rest of Buress' material was analyzed in chronological order in an effort to analyze his career trajectory and development of his onstage persona and craft.

The content was coded under three separate critical lenses, first looking at each joke and determining which classical theories of humor it utilized: relief theory, superiority theory, and incongruity theory. Jokes could be categorized into more than one theory or no theory, as any individual joke could utilize any of the three theories, a combination of the three, or hypothetically none at all. Jokes were analyzed based on the narrative content and the observed relationship between the comedian and the audience. Jokes using relief theory eased tension, either between the audience and the comedian, or the comedian and the subject of the joke. Jokes using superiority theory position the comedian into a high ground position, in opposition to either the audience or another figure in the narrative. Jokes using incongruity theory target contradictions and incongruences in society at large, or within the context of specific narratives.

Next, each joke was examined to determine which uses of humor and persuasion theories were being utilized, as exemplified in Lyttle's (2001) research: building rapport with the audience in order to increase the comedian's likeability; using ironic wisecracks to distract or discredit a counterargument; and/or the use of self-effacing humor to improve the comedian's credibility.

Lastly, the content was coded by sociopolitical subject matter, namely race relations, sex/gender/relationships, defiance of authority/police, American politics, violence, drugs/alcohol, and two broader, comprehensive categories: defiance of social norms/etiquette and the application of social norms/etiquette to the absurd. These categories emerged naturally when the author reviewed the material in each routine, with subsequent categories and themes emerging in later works, which then required returning to the older material to further code its content.

Each joke for the coding heuristic was drawn from the album track lists, since the distinctions for each bit was pre-determined by Buress, the ultimate authority on his own routines. In the case of *Comedy Camisado*, which is only available as a streaming special on Netflix, the names of each bit and the divisions

between any two bits were determined by the researcher by following the formatting of the previous three albums and by taking verbal cues and segues from the performer as ways to divide the material in a manner reflective of the album track listings.

IV. Findings/Results

The study found that incongruity theory was employed by 59 jokes (81.9% of 72 in total), followed by superiority theory (80.6%) and relief theory (63.9%). Forty-six jokes employed superiority and incongruity theories, and 34 jokes employed all three theories, as shown by Table 1.

Table 1. Breakdown of jokes by theories they relied on

	Relief Theory	Superiority Theory	Incongruity Theory	Superiority & Incongru- ity Theories	All Three Theories
Number of jokes with observed characteristic	48 out of 72	58 out of 72	59 out of 72	46 out of 72	34 out of 72
Percentage of total jokes	63.9%	80.6%	81.9%	63.9%	47.2%

The study found that ironic wisecracks were utilized by 65 jokes (90.3% of 72 in total), followed by self-effacing humor (77.8%) and building rapport with audience (56.9%). Fifty-six jokes utilized two persuasive strategies, and 24 jokes three persuasive strategies, as shown by Table 2.

Table 2. Breakdown of jokes by persuasive strategy they relied on

	Building Rapport with Audience	Ironic Wise- cracks	Self-Effacing Humor	Utilized Two Persuasive Strategies	Utilized Three Persuasive Strategies
Number of jokes with observed characteristic	41 out of 72	65 out of 72	46 out of 72	56 out of 72	24 out of 72
Percentage of total jokes	56.9%	90.3%	63.9%	77.8%	33.3%

The study found that the thematic element of defying social norms appeared in 53 jokes (73.6% of 72 in total); followed by applying social norms to absurdity (61.1%); violence (48.6%); sex, gender, or relationships (47.2%); drugs or alcohol (30.1%); race relations (29.2%); defiance of authority/police (29.2%); American politics (8.3%) and religion (5.6%), as shown by Table 3.

Table 3: Breakdown of jokes by categorical thematic content or subject matter

	Race Relations	Sex, Gender, Relation- ships	Defiance of Authority / Police	U.S. Politics	Religion	Violence	Drugs / Alcohol	Defiance of Social Norms	Applying Social Norms to Absurdity
Number of jokes with observed charac- teristic	21 out of 72	34 out of 72	21 out of 72	6 out of 72	4 out of 72	35 out of 72	22 out of 72	53 out of 72	44 out of 72
Percent- age of total jokes	29.2%	47.2%	29.2%	8.3%	5.6%	48.6%	30.1%	73.6%	61.1%

The study also found that 16 jokes (22.2% of 72 in total) had thematic content or subject matter pertaining to 5 or more of the categories enumerated in Table 3, followed by 47.2% pertaining to 3 or 4 categories, 27.8% pertaining to 1 or 2 categories, and 4.2% containing no sociopolitical content, as shown by Table 4.

Table 4: Breakdown of jokes by spectrum of thematic content or subject matter

	No sociopolitical content	1 or 2 categories	3 or 4 categories	5 or more categories
Number of jokes with observed characteristic	3 out of 72	20 out of 72	34 out of 72	16 out of 72
Percentage of total jokes	4.2%	27.8%	47.2%	22.2%

V. Discussion

As was to be expected, every Buress joke studied could be attributed to at least one theory of humor. This result was unsurprising, as it is Buress' intention to entertain and amuse his audience through humor; it is, after all, the reason he is performing a routine on stage in the first place. It is also unsurprising that Buress makes the most use of superiority theory and incongruity theory, as this is in line with the typical Buress' joke structure. Buress builds his act around identifying the incongruences in his daily life, in American society and pop culture, and even in hypothetical scenarios entirely of his own design, positioning himself to have a moralistic high ground through the course of his narrative, and then setting about fundamentally dismantling any potential opposition through ironic wisecracks, dismissing counterarguments, and projecting a sense of victory or accomplishment.

The Cosby bit makes use of all three theories of humor at different points in the joke. Superiority theory comes into play when Buress positions himself as having a moral high ground over Cosby, citing the 13 existing allegations of sexual assault as reason enough to dismiss Cosby's own preachy morals.

Incongruity theory is invoked when Buress points out that Cosby so readily lords his morality over others in spite of the heinous crimes he's alleged to have committed, and again when Buress points out that despite knowledge of these accusations, Cosby had until that point escaped unscathed in the public eye. Buress uses relief theory when he jokes that he simply wanted to make it uncomfortable for the audience to revisit *The Cosby Show* after having been enlightened on the true nature of its star, humorously addressing the elephant in the room while at the same time suggesting that in spite of these criticisms, Cosby would face no repercussions, or so Buress anticipated at the time.

Buress made effective use of all three theories of persuasion, but 90% of his material makes use of ironic wisecracks; as a comedian, ironic wisecracks distracting from the counterargument of his rhetorical opposition is his bread and butter. This is the sarcastic, smart-aleck persona captured in the *GQ* profile. Interestingly, in *My Name is Hannibal*, Buress eases into the ironic wisecracks as the set progresses, but in all three following specials, the ironic wisecracks are unrelenting, appearing in nearly every joke. In his first two specials, Buress was less willing to use self-effacing humor, only rarely positioning himself as the butt of a joke, but in his later two specials, self-effacing humor works itself into almost every bit, allowing Buress to laugh at himself and relate more to audiences. It is understandable that his least used method of persuasion was rapport building, as once he has established his comic persona, he has already predisposed the audience to like him and be on his side. It is noteworthy that in his first two specials, much of the rapport building occurs toward the beginning of his routines, while in *Live from Chicago* there was more rapport building toward the back half of his set and in *Comedy Camisado* he builds a rapport throughout the entire set.

The Cosby joke, understandably, exclusively makes use of ironic wisecracks as a persuasive theory. Of note, however, is that at the end of the bit, Buress assures his audience that what he's discussing is, in fact, not hyperbolic at all, imploring the audience to conduct their own research and to take the issue he's raising seriously. This is exactly the action Nabi's research suggests comedians take in order to reaffirm the seriousness of a persuasive message and to counteract those in the audience that might dismiss a message as just another joke.

My Name is Hannibal featured by far the least amount of sociopolitical content, with no jokes covering more than four categories, but the material covered more ground in the second half of the album. In contrast, his second special, Animal Furnace, addresses the most sociopolitical topics by a solid margin, nearly doubling that of My Name is Hannibal. Animal Furnace also includes significantly more jokes addressing sex, gender, and relationships, a trend that continued with Live from Chicago and Comedy Camisado as well. Both of his later two specials had significantly more sociopolitical content than My Name is Hannibal, although neither quite reaches the frequency with which Animal Furnace addresses such topics. Both of the later two specials also tend to feature more sociopolitical content in the back half of the set list. Interestingly, Comedy Camisado includes more jokes that only address a single sociopolitical topic than previous specials, as well as two jokes that do not cover any sociopolitical subject matter. Prior to the material on Comedy Camisado, the only other joke that did not cover any sociopolitical material was the opening joke to My Name is Hannibal, which strictly functioned as a means of establishing a rapport with the audience. It is worth noting that this was the only special in which the distinction from joke-to-joke was defined by the researcher, as Comedy Camisado is a Netflix-exclusive special and does not have an accompanying album or track listing.

The Cosby joke material covered four different categories of sociopolitical content, all while adhering closely to a singular subject. It is set apart from Buress' other material by how directly and aggressively he targets his subject. Buress holds nothing back, and the blunt fearlessness and directness with which he addresses such controversial sociopolitical issues, including rape culture and the notion that American celebrities are somehow above the law, is uncommon compared to the rest of his body of work. As Krefting noted, charged humor is most effective when deployed sparingly. Perhaps because in some ways the Cosby bit both stands out among Buress' comedic repertoire and exemplifies his comic persona and sensibilities, the infamous joke managed to both boost Hannibal Buress' public profile to the A-List of stand-up comedy and spur the takedown of the seemingly untouchable Cosby (Krefting, 2014, p. 2).

V. Conclusions

The comedy of Buress frequently employs incongruity theory and superiority theory, as exemplified in the way he positions himself against his rhetorical targets, drawing attention to the contradictions of daily life and the inherent ridiculousness of his interactions with others. Buress employs persuasive theories in order to keep the audience on his side in the scenarios described in his narrative comedy, utilizing ironic wisecracks in nearly every joke in order to dismiss any counterarguments to his positions. This is a key component of his on-stage persona.

While Buress doesn't consider his material primarily sociopolitical, nearly 96% of the material studied addressed a sociopolitical topic in some way, shape, or form, with 69.4% of the material studied addressing three or more sociopolitical subjects. While this material is not always as controversial as his infamous Cosby bit, Buress makes effective use of persuasive techniques throughout his routines. Given the right circumstances, it would not be inconceivable for another Buress joke to go viral and have the widespread ramifications and influence on public opinion that his jokes targeting Bill Cosby did.

Tracing back to the old adage "a lot of truth is said in jest," or even further back to the era when court jesters were the only people who could get away with criticizing the king to his face, comedy has been one of the most powerful forms of communication. Just as the title of his most recent release, *Comedy Camisado*, suggests, Buress engages his audience with a surprise attack: not just with unpredictable punch lines, but by raising salient sociopolitical points and sparking discussion. Buress is a comedian who understands the power of the platform he has, and rather than being an overtly political comedian and risk bisecting his audience, he peppers his sociopolitical comedy into his set at just the right moments. It's not just about getting the audience to laugh at what he says, it's about getting them to engage with what he has to say on a higher level. Just like in the viral clip where he targets Cosby, Buress is hyper-aware that his audience can and will Google anything he tells them to.

Further research into the persuasive effects of humor, particularly sociopolitical subject matter, and its influence on audiences could expand upon this case study by including the bodies of work of other stand-up comedians, first by cross-examining the works of Buress with his contemporaries and their direct influences. Expanding further, additional research may study the most influential comedians of each era and tracing a "comedic lineage" of charged humor to further contextualize the influence of sociopolitical stand-up routines. When studying comedians of different eras, research must account for the cultural and societal differences and ensure that the performances are rooted in the historical and social contexts of the time period they were performed.

Additional research on Buress' comedy, particularly an entire tour of sets would make for a larger, more insightful case study. Research could analyze how a larger sample size of vastly different audiences, when they are made up of different demographics and engaging the material in different settings, are more or less persuaded by the comedy routine. Studying the effect of humor in persuasion theory could be furthered by examining the differences in audience engagement and reactions between live audiences witnessing a stand-up comedy routine performed in real time and those listening to recorded material through a digital platform where material could be paused, replayed, fact-checked, and researched by a motivated audience member.

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An Analysis of Agency Directors' Strategies in Casting Applicants for Reality-Based Television

Mia Geswelli

Strategic Communications
Elon University

Abstract

Reality-based television has developed as an entertaining and dynamic viewing platform with the power to catapult non-actors into the status of iconic television characters. This qualitative study investigated how agency directors execute the general casting process, identify what qualities make for a memorable reality cast member, and interpret the concept of production editing for a reality series. Based on four in-depth interviews conducted with casting agents, the study identified three success factors: "layered" individuals, fluid character storylines, and effective production and editing within reality television.

I. Introduction

To meet the changing demands of viewing audiences, television programming utilizes the ability to quickly alter programming choices to appeal to current viewing tastes. The popularity of reality television filled this need for swift programming choices and created a niche form of television programming and entertainment. One of the most compelling concepts of reality television is the its use of real people or non-actors to contribute to the "diversification of the television culture" (Murray & Oulette, 2004, p. 11). The driving force that constructs popular reality television series is the cast of characters within them.

The casting process serves as the most crucial ingredient when developing a series storyline that will appeal to the public. Casting focuses on finding the right mixture of "personalities, looks and chemistry to fit each show's theme" (Lee, 2009). The foremost precept that casting executives adhere to is simply making the reality show interesting (Lee, 2009). In doing so, casting executives look for qualities in people that will fit the key cliché characters who will create the conflict, controversy, and pure amusement (Lee, 2009). Cast members are the key components to enthralling reality-based television watching.

The majority of reality shows are based on one central aspect: a cluster of "real people with different personalities interacting with one another" (Lee, 2009). Series like MTV's The Real World showcase dramatic scenarios between seven strangers selected to live in a house together. The show has served as one of MTV's longest standing and most popular series ever created. In order for a show like this to accumulate its notable ratings, the casting team sieves through an enormous number of applicants during casting calls, narrowing down potential candidates based on whether the team can envision a candidate for a particular role. Once eligible applicants are found to fit the mold of a certain role, they are cast in the hopes of becoming the next big realty TV icon.

Keywords: reality television, casting, casting executives, casting agents, editing Email: mgeswelli@elon.edu

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The key to a casting agent's job is discovering charismatic, captivating, and exaggerated subjects who make for enticing television watching. This paper examined the executive casting choices and patterns since the arrival of reality-based television through analyzing personal interviews with four unsung heroes of the pioneer of reality-based television production.

II. Background

Reality television has dominated entertainment TV programming since its inception. However, reality programming is not as recent a phenomenon as many researchers assert (Baker, 2003, p. 57). Shows such as Candid Camera and Real People are commonly cited as the initiators of reality television, and even earlier shows from the 1950s, such as Dragnet and The Big Story, display noteworthy characteristics of reality-based television (Baker, 2003, p. 57). In 2003, Fox's Temptation Island, which featured four couples testing their relationship by dating other singles on a remote island, helped precipitate an array of "singles"-oriented reality formats (Andrejevic, 2004, p. 7). By the conclusion of 2003, the successes of hit shows like American Idol, The Bachelorette, and Joe Millionaire convinced networks to formulate long-term plans for reality TV (Murray & Ouellette, 2004, p. 6). Suddenly, all major networks worked to develop reality formats within their programming agenda, and more than 30 reality-based shows were aired during the 2004 television season (Andrejevic, 2004, p. 7). The genre surfaced as the "preeminent programming format" of the modern age (Essany, 2013, p. 17).

III. Literature Review

A widely held principal in the reality television casting industry suggests that it is not the general premise of a reality show that impacts the prosperity of the series, but instead the cast members themselves who generate its overall success. Casting agents often employ this dictum when assessing talent and making casting choices. An individual with anything "extra" that resonates with a viewing audience makes for a qualified cast member on a reality show. The more "overly emotional" or "mentally unstable" a cast member, the higher the potential for buzz-creating conflict (Pozner, 2010, p. 27). Casting directors keep this key cliché in mind when scouting talent for their shows. And yet, the qualities the casting professionals look for in people can be difficult to describe (Pozner, 2010, p. 27). Jonathan Murray, head of Bunim/Murray Productions, states that the secret to casting is to "look for people who are not looking for us" (Tomashoff, 2011). Often credibility and authenticity are crucial characteristics an individual must possess to be cast for a reality show, but defining these vague traits is not always an easy task (Tomashoff, 2011). Balancing personality assessment for interesting, authentic, and unique is an instinct that casting director's must rely on to cast shows. These intangible qualities are the key components to casting decisions where often millions of dollars are budgeted for production costs.

Reality television casting seems to possess a formulaic process in determining appropriate cast members. The book *Reality Bites Back: The Troubling Truth About Guilty Pleasure TV*, puts forth the idea that cast members are molded into "predetermined stock characters," such as "The Weeper," "The Bitch" and "The Angry Black Woman" (Pozner, 2010, p. 28). David O'Connor, casting director of Chicago's O'Connor Casting Co., expounds on this theory and states that certain personalities are key to making good reality series. There are the "devil" characters that create conflict, "drama kings and queens" who flourish on controversy, "the pushovers" who are vulnerable to meltdowns, and the "oddballs" (Lee, 2009). According to O'Connor, casting staffs are especially eager to find three types of characters: "the oddballs, the best, and the disastrous" (Lee, 2009). Although "the best" make it through based on innate talent, the others "make for great TV" (Lee, 2009). Arguably, it is the combination of these characters and their interplay that drives the show and sets the direction for continuing viewer interest.

This approach in selecting certain characters for a reality series has raised questions regarding the industry's authenticity. In the book *Reality TV: Remaking Television Culture*, the authors examine the reception of reality television programming, stimulation of questions, concerns that critics judge as artificially skewing the "reality" of scenes, and the impact that "editing, reconstruction, producer mediation, and prefab settings have on the audience's access to 'the real'" (Murray & Ouellette, 2004, p.7). The authors contend

that viewers, participants, and producers are less invested in "absolute truth" and instead, more interested in "the space that exists between reality and fiction" (Murray & Ouellette, 2004, p. 7). Many industry insiders feel that the overall goal of reality programming is to examine "the promise of a format that offers not an escape from reality, but an escape into reality" (Andrejevic, 2004, p.8). This theory presents the idea that reality TV demands a "new level of cultural participation on the part of TV viewers," and in turn, innate instincts of casting directors to fulfill the demands of reality-based television and push the boundaries of the genre (Murray & Ouellette, 2004, p.7). The innate instincts of casting directors may be pushed even further with the evolving forms of reality TV.

Recently, a *Fox News* article elaborated on the programming synthesis of the real and the scripted to create a new sense of drama for viewer. "There is a sense that people want to see more unique forms of drama and comedy that feature complex characters and unique plots that sometimes have controversial subjects," says Applebaum, host and producer of the online radio show *Tomorrow Will Be Televised* (Johnson, 2016). The success of scripted on demand networks, such as Netflix and Hulu, has drawn reality-based networks into the field with both scripted and reality entertainment (Johnson, 2016). Reality-based television programmers state that this is a natural way to expand and appeal to reality audiences who demand interesting storylines and characters (Johnson, 2016). Programming directors may feel that a combination of these forms allows for a more creative platform and an ability to quickly seize upon the changes in audience tastes. It remains to be seen if traditional reality-based networks will offer both scripted programming and reality programming or combine the two genres into one form of expression. This potential synthesis will present new challenges to casting directors who will be responsible for casting characters in a format that blends acting and genuine reactions.

Review of the previous studies established a foundation to learn more about the casting trends and choices for reality television for this study, which interviews four current casting executives. This paper addressed the following research questions:

- RQ 1: What are the specific qualities that casting executives look for in potential cast members when casting a reality show?
- RQ 2: How are editing and post-production processes altering the final image of cast members?

IV. Research Method

To analyze the casting trends and choices that agents employ for reality television programming, this research relied on in-depth interviews. One-on-one interviews continue to stand as one of the most conventional data gathering techniques for qualitative research and also offer unique probative elements that casual conversation may reveal with offhanded comments and gestures. Pre-arranged interviews made through contacts who have working relationships with interviewees "enable interviewer/researchers to obtain information that cannot be gathered through content and observation alone" (Rosenberry & Vicker, 2009, 57). This type of qualitative in-depth interview that pivots off established relationships allows an interviewer to assess an interviewee's opinions and experiences more comprehensively.

The current author interviewed four female casting agents residing in the greater New York City area. The participants, ranging from 24-34 years of age, currently work as casting associates, directors or managers for leading companies, such as Viacom or major freelance production companies. Past internship experiences allowed the author to contact two of her former supervisors at MTV casting within the network's talent and series development department. These executives agreed to a telephone interview and, in turn, arranged for introductions to a freelance casting associate and the casting director at 3PX Productions. Each participant responded to previously crafted and forwarded interview questions. The interviews lasted between 35-45 minutes. Some of the more off-handed comments revealed nuggets of honesty that helped project the future of reality-based television. The interview questions forwarded to each participant prior to the discussions were:

- 1. Could you describe your path to the casting aspect of reality-based television programming?
- 2. How has casting changed during your career?

- 3. How are casting candidates sourced?
- 4. What are the factors that are important to you when casting for a reality-based project?
- 5. Many reality-based projects hire individuals without acting experience. What are the particular challenges that this poses?
- 6. In what direction do you feel reality-based programming is headed?
- 7. Given your understanding of reality television, how close to real life should the final version be? How much should consumers understand that there might be edits and modifications?
- 8. Are there any lessons you have learned that you would like to share regarding your casting experiences?

Each participant served as a unit of analysis and their responses were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. The results below showcase themes derived from the responses of each interviewee.

V. Findings

The Evolution of the Reality-Based Casting Process

Each interview began with a broad opening question targeted to invite interviewees to discuss their individual path which led to casting for reality-based television programming. All participants expressed that reality television casting has changed dramatically within the last 5-10 years and attributed much of that change to the emergence of new technology. One participant, the casting director of MTV Series Development, explained that the casting process is much easier today than when she began casting for reality television in 2007.

"The timeline was pretty excruciating. Things that nowadays take less than 24 hours for a turnaround were taking up to two weeks. It progressively got better and better – when I was working on 16 & Pregnant, we would go to Duane Reade or Walgreens and buy disposable video cameras that we would send to the potential cast mates, they would then videotape themselves with very explicit directions and send them back to us. We would then take the footage, wipe the video camera clean, and send that same camera out to another potential cast member." (personal communication, March 15, 2016)

This casting director went on to explain that real-time Skype interviews have allowed the casting process to compress the amount of time needed to not only interview and assess candidates, but to make definitive casting choices. This advance has presented its own challenge: establishing a realistic application cut-off period that will produce a fruitful draw of candidates in a short period of time without limiting the pool of candidates that may be perfect for the role, but too late in applying.

The manager of MTV Series Development recalled a burdensome casting routine when she began in 2009. She described the current casting process now utilized throughout her department as follows:

"When I was first starting out, I did a lot of research online, but it was mostly cold calling. There wasn't a social media platform to find talent beyond MySpace and LiveJournal. Now, we conduct interviews over Skype or FaceTime. From there, we can edit within an hour and send it up the flagpole. The casting process has become much more efficient – video recording capabilities have a lot to do with that." (personal communication, March 17, 2016)

In doing so, social media has saved production costs and allowed entire casting departments to streamline their efforts. An unforeseen consequence of social media's impact is the need for fewer casting employees. Now the job can be accomplished with half the staff that was originally needed for casting a show.

Expounding on the importance of the role of social media in casting and research, the casting director at 3PX Productions noted that today there are websites specifically devoted to collecting information from individuals who wish to be considered for roles on reality television projects. This new avenue is merely an augmentation to other social media platforms for casting considerations.

"Social media has become super huge. There are standard reality casting websites, which have become slightly obsolete. People still cast that way, but it's not as common nowadays. It is much more valuable and constructive when the casting executive searches for and finds individuals who they believe could fit the mold of a character. This is done through searching Instagram, Facebook, Vine, Blogs, etc." (personal communication, March 30, 2016)

Social media has allowed casting directors to view potential candidates for genuine authenticity of character and review a history of their behavior. The potential for "just acting" the part of a character to gain a casted role is much less of a concern since casting agents can examine a candidate's long-term history of posted behavior on social media.

Scouting Talent for Reality-Based Programming

The process of discovering talent to form complete characters for a reality series is done meticulously by casting agents who acknowledge that one-note characters do not add to the depth and interest of the series. The casting director of MTV Series Development describes the current target audience of the MTV network and how the casting department strives to meet its programming needs.

"The demographic of casting sources we go after is really savvy. We work hard to make sure we're not going after the stereotypes anymore – and we work even harder to make sure we are finding people who will help round out a cast." (personal communication, March 15, 2016)

She went on to explain the process she employs when searching for talent.

"Usually the casting begins with the idea and the concept. If I'm casting for a show like 16 & Pregnant or Teen Mom, I'm browsing organizations that support teens that are pregnant or schools that serve to pregnant teens — I start with the idea or concept and I work backwards. There's a million ways to source people for casting because there's a million ideas. You have to get super specific to get the best characters." (personal communication, March 15, 2016)

At the same time, an interesting individual who may not fit within the idea for a character will not be eliminated, but instead spin the programming idea into a new direction. Casting directors must remain openminded during casting research and often unique candidates may be "saved" for other potential projects or casting opportunities.

The manager of MTV Series Development explained that the type of show drives the direction of what casting producers seek in an individual during casting.

"If we are casting a one-off, for example, we are casting three brides for a bridal story; it won't necessarily matter what may be happening in the bride's future, but the most important aspect will be her personality and her story the day of her wedding. Alternatively, if we are casting a docuseries, we want to cast people that have a very clear, forward-moving story." (personal communication, March 17, 2016)

Casting for characters with a well-defined element, such as pregnant, transgender, or a person of a certain ethnic group, is merely the baseline for casting choices, which will then focus on an individual candidate and what he or she can bring to the series' appeal.

One casting agent further expressed that the hidden gem candidates are the ones who simply do not want to be on the casting couch.

"I want to find the person that doesn't want to be on TV – that's how you produce the best characters. I don't want the person who is applying to every show. I want the family whose lives are so interesting, compelling, and unique, and I want to showcase that what is normal to them is completely outrageous to us." (personal communication, March 30, 2016)

These type of characters are generally the ones found through social media. They have not applied for consideration for a casting role and are instead simply living their lives aloud through social media posts. Often, they are completely unaware that their lives or lifestyle makes for interesting TV.

Who Can Make It Big in Reality Television

Trending themes were apparent in interviews with participants regarding the key factors considered when evaluating candidates for reality-based projects. The attributes most mentioned by casting agents when assessing potential candidates were "personality" and "depth." There is a constant tug-of-war that occurs when agents evaluate an individual's suitability for casting in a reality series. The casting associate producer at Leftfield Pictures shared her opinion on the traits that most resonate with her when assessing candidates.

"Personality is extremely important. Cast members usually need to be loud, but more importantly, must have a great storyline and way of expressing themselves. Do their eccentricities make us want to see how they will react or what they will do next? Do they have something that we can follow throughout seasons? That is vital to look for when evaluating each candidate while casting." (personal communication, March 16, 2016)

The casting director at 3PX Productions agreed that personality is essential when evaluating a candidate, as well as other attributes.

"I like to find characters that are unfiltered and individuals who are unique and have a very distinctive voice. They must have a depth to their point of view that makes their storyline more interesting." (personal communication, March 30, 2016)

The casting director of MTV Series Development further expressed that a layered individual makes for a marketable reality cast member, one of which viewers will want to follow.

"We want to make sure we are finding layered individuals who have a lot of different things that make up their inner being and that they are outspoken about it. It is this depth and big voice that makes them suitable for casting. We used to just turn a blind eye and be like 'she's pretty, she's entertaining enough, she'll bring drama,' but now our viewers aren't interested in drama for drama's sake." (personal communication, March 15, 2016)

The manager of MTV Series Development articulated that a candidate does not need to be the loudest or most dramatic person in the room, but someone who can bring out some range of emotion either in cast mates or the audience.

"What is most important is a big personality and people who are very strong in their convictions. I want them to be able to pull comedy or frustration and cause some sort of reaction; otherwise it would be really boring." (personal communication, March 17, 2016)

All casting agents agreed that the individual must naturally possess a personality that is not only "watchable," but also distinctive and compelling. Part of the agent's job is executing balance in assessing personality and suitability for role casting. These characteristics are sometimes at odds with each other—it is the casting agent's responsibility to achieve a proper mix of both.

The Impact of Edits and Modifications in Reality Programming

The question of how close to real life the final version of a reality-based program is/should be arises from the common criticism that reality television is not "real" at all. Each interviewed casting agent related differing opinions and experiences with the editing process, which, at times, must be finessed to retain the reality aspect of the show. The casting director of MTV Series Development explained that there are different types of reality television: How loosely the plot is managed will determine the level of direction and editing that takes place for the televised segment.

"Certain shows are produced with a stronger hand in production and the viewer is probably aware that the entertainment is directed. For example, The Bachelor is a show that you watch and enjoy and assume that everything you are watching is just simply overproduced. That's what the show is, that's what you're being given, it makes quality television, and people love it — but at the end of the day you have to know that these producers have a heavy hand in what's going on; people are being edited to say things that weren't said in that order. There are other shows out there where you should feel good knowing what you're watching is extremely close to what's happening in real life. Jersey Shore is a great example — you are

talking about eight strong individuals who are put in a house together – already that is an extenuating circumstance." (personal communication, March 15, 2016)

The manager of MTV Series Development further described the concept of overproducing and its presence within reality television.

"The truth of the matter is yes, sure – we could edit a single episode, but if it's not consistent with somebody's personality, it won't work for an entire season. Overproducing doesn't really work well for anybody – it's not great business and you won't really get what you want from the talent. With that, the final version should be pretty close to real life. We always tell talent, 'look, this will be you condensed into 22 minutes – so it is the sliced up version of yourself.' We can't put words in anyone's mouth and we can't do anything that they are not willing to do." (personal communication, March 17, 2016)

The casting director at 3PX Productions concurred on the subject and explained the importance of casting the right type of person for a role allows for a fluid storyline throughout seasons and minimizes editing and production.

"There are some shows that are very much produced, but if you cast people with very authentic, compelling, and genuine stories, you don't need to overproduce it – you let the story speak for itself. Editing can only do so much – it is not as magical as one may think." (personal communication, March 30, 2016)

Each casting producer alluded to the assumption that viewers have an innate understanding of a show's level of directed production. The casting associate producer at Leftfield Pictures discussed the function of editing and the consumer's response to an unscripted show.

"Obviously we have to edit it – it can't be a 24-hour unscripted show. I think people know that. I think people want to know as much as they want to know in order to be entertained." (personal communication, March 16, 2016)

As reality TV has become a part of modern culture, audiences are savvier to aspects of the genre that are now part and parcel of series production. Editing will always be necessary to filter through the many hours of recording; the extent and modifications of those edits will depend upon the type of series and guided storyline. All casting agents credit the viewing audience with knowing the amount of guidance and alterations that are employed for certain types of "reality" television.

The Future of Reality-Based Programming

Each casting executive shared similar thoughts when speaking about the future of reality-based programming. Although all were uncertain of what exactly is to come next, they agreed that reality television would evolve into a new format. The casting director at 3PX Productions shared her viewpoint:

"I feel like it is back to the Wild, Wild West because people have seen so much and the question of 'where do we go now?' emerges. I think there will be a shift away from docuseries and a lot of fresh formats will develop. I think there might be a hybrid between docuseries and scripted series." (personal communication, March 30, 2016)

The manager of MTV Series Development believes there is much in the television realm to compare with real time social media, and following real-time events appeals to a knowledgeable demographic.

"It is now more about the people. There is no wall between the eye and the talent anymore. Everything happens in real time now on social media. People want to know what they are seeing isn't six months old – it makes it so much better when they feel like they are invested in the moment." (personal communication, March 17, 2016)

The idea of live programming resurfaced when speaking to the casting director of MTV Series Development, who believes viewers will begin to watch television in real time.

"Cable networks in general are just so oversaturated. I think everyone is running out of ideas, everyone is frantic about how to make something new and something fresh. We are quickly moving towards a really tight turnaround . . . I think that reality television is moving in the direction of live programming." (personal communication, March 15, 2016)

The casting associate producer at Leftfield Pictures concluded that employers within production are working in an experimental stage, attempting to discover what will work best for television. The field is ripe for new concepts and perhaps a composite of several types of television platforms.

"We're all trying to figure it out – TV in general is at an interesting place and I guess in 4-5 years we'll see." (personal communication, March 16, 2016)

VI. Conclusions

Casting for reality television has evolved with the genre itself. Reality-based television began as the unproven idea that certain peoples' lives and situations would draw a viewing audience. The appeal of popular new shows was their attention-grabbing themes coupled with the outrageous real-life characters that drove the energy of the series. Casting for this genre of television involved hiring a group of non-actors with strong, unique, and differing personalities. The interaction and conflict between the characters provided entertaining television viewing because it treated the audience to a type of uncensored voyeurism. As this type of television began to score success among audiences, casting for reality-based television became more formulaic. Eventually, casting directors began to look for certain types of people: the drama queens, the jocks, the bombshells, etc. However, as audiences and critics began to criticize "how real reality television was manufactured," casting directors changed course and once again began to look for characters with eccentric personalities and interesting personal storylines. The arrival of extensively used social media has resulted in an entire generation of individuals who are comfortable with exposing themselves and their lives. Now casting directors have a vast pool of potential reality TV candidates.

Analysis of the current state of casting for reality-based television hinges on the following: the specific qualities that casting executives look for in potential cast members for a reality show; and the extent to which production and editing make reality television *unreal*. Interviews conducted with four casting executives of reality-based television revealed that casting candidates are assessed on their personalities, manners of expression, and authenticity as characters within a particular reality series realm. In assessing the extent to which editing and postproduction practices make reality television something other than the real, one must again consider the history of the production of the genre. Originally, reality-based television was minimally directed, edited, and produced. As the success of the series and competition for the viewing audiences became more fierce, casting directors began to use a heavier hand in the editing and production of a reality series in an effort to appeal to what they believed audiences desired. This manipulation had a negative effect as viewing audiences became savvier, aware of the overproduction, and demanded true reality in their reality television.

The ebb and flow of casting considerations reflect the ever-evolving genre of reality television. The casting executives spoke candidly of their early casting experiences and each referred to instinct as the prevailing factor in the final choices. As the genre evolved, casting considerations began to take on more formulaic designs that sought to cast stereotypical personalities to drive the storyline and character interaction. Over time, this formula became unworkable as reality television began to lose its originality to standard character roles that each reality series seemed to infuse into their project. Viewing audiences demanded more genuine reality in their reality television and unique non-actor characters began to push the envelope of acceptability. Casting executives met this demand by filling casting choices with interesting characters that possessed their own intriguing storylines, and once again the personality of the candidate became an important component of casting assessment. The current state of casting may take yet another turn as scripted television explodes with success on cable and on demand networks that now rival established networks for television audiences. Recent industry literature coupled with the personal interviews implies that a new form of reality is on the horizon, which combines real-time programming with scripted direction. Scriptwriter Wendy Whitman explains how viewers are now more "jaded and skeptical" than ever, resulting in a trend toward scripted programming that will fit viewers interests (Johnson, 2016). Casting executives may

face the additional challenge of casting trained talent *and* real-life personalities for series that will possess a scripted element. This synthesis will present new hurdles for casting agents who will be charged with the responsibility of finding a combination that is workable and successful. Whichever way the winds of reality-based casting blow, the one caveat that remains was plainly stated by a Discovery executive, who mused that "real people are just harder to control" (Johnson, 2016). This fact will continue to burden all casting choices and also offer the potential for phenomenal success.

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The European Union's Framing of the European Refugee Crisis

Tara Wirth

Strategic Communications
Elon University

Abstract

During the past decade, Turkey has been negotiating for European Union membership—a request met with concerns over the country's human rights record and economic status. Yet Turkey, due to its location, has been at the front lines of the European Refugee Crisis, with millions of refugees fleeing their home countries because of ISIS and the Syrian civil war. This study explores how the EU is communicating about the refugee crisis and if the crisis is affecting Turkey's membership negotiations. The qualitative study, which uses framing theory, analyzed the emerging themes in 22 press releases from the EU website.

I. Introduction

In 2015, millions of refugees fled their home countries of Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, along with others, to find safety and opportunity in Europe. Since the start of 2016, approximately 135,711 people have traveled to Europe by water (BBC, 2016). This mass migration has put a lot of stress on not only European countries, but also countries impacted by the threat of ISIS and the Syrian civil war.

The European Union (EU), an international organization consisting of 28 countries, has been unable to reach a unified solution or policy to the European Refugee Crisis. However, the EU has identified the importance of Turkey's cooperation and communication with Europe at this time because of Turkey's strategic location. According to Al Jazeera, Turkey has taken in 2.5 million refugees and spent about \$8.5 billion for resources to support them (Bora, 2016). Since Turkey borders Syria to the south, and EU members, Greece and Bulgaria to the other side, the country has been used as a path into the EU.

Communication between the EU and Turkey has increased significantly over the past few months to try and negotiate an agreement and solution. However, for the past 10 years, Turkey has been in the process of negotiating for EU membership. The EU has continued to express concerns over the years, and the institution has identified certain areas, such as human rights and the economy, that need to be addressed by Turkey before membership is granted.

Until now, the EU held all the power regarding Turkey's membership status; Turkey was inclined to reform and progress in areas of concern because it could lead to advancements in EU negotiations. Today, the EU is dependent on Turkey to create and uphold a plan that will keep more refugees within the country and limit the total number of people that enter Europe. According to *The Telegraph* (October 16, 2015),

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Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan will accept nothing less than full EU membership in exchange for working on the refugee problem with the EU (Holehouse, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the frames from official EU press releases and statements regarding the European Refugee Crisis and the organization's relationship and negotiations with Turkey. The study explains how the European Refugee Crisis has affected EU official messages regarding Turkey and its possible EU membership. By using a qualitative content analysis, the study focuses on how the EU is framing and communicating with external audiences. The study will first examine literature about the framing theory and then extend into crisis management, European communication policy, and public diplomacy. As a guide for this study, the author made the following thesis statement: The EU is using frames that focus mostly on problems with Turkey's actions during the European Refugee Crisis, thus reducing the delay in Turkey's progress in negotiations for EU membership.

II. Literature Review

While this is an event that is ongoing and constantly changing, significant research has been conducted regarding public diplomacy, EU-Turkish relations, and framing. This research provides background information, but and noted a gap in the literature that could be further researched.

For the past 10 years, Turkey has been trying to portray a certain image of itself to the EU and to other external international audiences, specifically to proceed with EU membership negotiations. This is an example of nation branding. According to Fan (2010), the purpose of nation branding is to "align the nation's image to the reality" (p. 6). The issue with analyzing Turkey's nation branding today is that Turkey's political and social climate is constantly changing due to the European Refugee Crisis. While many countries frequently face shifts in their internal community within their borders, due to its location, Turkey has also been affected by external factors, such as the intensifying Syrian war and an increase in migration flows.

However, Turkey's brand is not the only one that has been affected. The EU, an established and respected European institution, has increasingly been in the public eye during this refugee crisis. The international community is analyzing the EU's actions in response to the refugee crisis through the media. Since Turkey is considered to be the gateway into Europe, the EU must address the situation carefully. The messages disseminated by the EU during this crisis could affect its relationship with Turkey, thus influence Turkey's role in the refugee crisis, and change the negotiations for membership. Turkey's government through the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for European Union Affairs is also disseminating messages using press releases and announcements about these current issues, which could be argued to also be impacting EU relations, but the Turkish messages are not the focus of this study.

While the EU may have created a stable identity over the past 20 years, this crisis may drastically change its public reputation, image, and communication strategies. According to Gilpin (2010), when an organization is constructing its image, it "adapts and responds to feedback or changes in the stakeholder environment" (p. 267). These press releases and statements found on the EU website could be used, if desired, by the EU to respond to Turkey's current obstacles. However, there is still a gap in the literature about how these EU communication strategies, specifically about Turkey, can affect the country's negotiations for membership.

Public Diplomacy

The EU was first created to promote a "supranational cooperation" after World War II, and has developed into a multi-faceted and structured institution that promotes human rights, freedom, and security (Valentini, 2008, p.104). This shift in focus adjusted the organization's public diplomacy; the EU recognized numerous internal publics it had to address through its communication strategies. Valentini (2008) explains that the definition of public diplomacy can be expanded to mean that a nation is "communicating and cultivating a desired image among foreign publics" (p.105). These foreign publics are often the citizens of its member nations. Wang (2006) describes this process as using "soft power" to promote the success and position of a nation or global institution in the international community. He states that the messages are meant to enhance the external view of the nation or institution.

Valentini also discusses how the EU has reached the European citizens and EU members; however, she does not deeply address the extent to which the EU communicates with foreign publics and non-EU members. While the votes of the European citizens are most influential to the structure of the EU, the EU is facing a larger international issue that includes several non-European countries. These countries, such as Turkey and Jordan, have been enduring a steep increase in migrants who have fled the war in Syria or are seeking to escape the threat of ISIS. While many are staying in these neighboring countries, there are a large number of migrants who are trying to obtain safety in European countries. While some are legally gaining asylum in Europe, some migrants are using Turkey to enter the EU. This is an international issue regarding migration and asylum policies. For Turkey specifically, this could be a negotiating tactic during the EU accession process.

Olsson (2013) studied the effects on public diplomacy when a crisis occurs. She borrowed the definition from Boin and Hart, who described a crisis as the time "when a community of people—an organization, a town, or a nation—perceives an urgent threat to core values which must be dealt with under conditions of uncertainty" (p. 220). When the threat of ISIS increased and civilians started fleeing their homes for safety in Europe, European countries were overwhelmed with the influx of migrants and people seeking asylum. The countries were, and still are for the most part, unsure of how to help and handle the large number of refugees entering their country looking for shelter and food. According to Olsson, to establish an effective public diplomacy plan, the EU must first make sense of the situation by identifying the affected stakeholders within and outside of the EU, then connect with the appropriate actors—government or non-government entities—and lastly, the EU must communicate their key messages to these stakeholders (2013, p. 221).

This last step is the most important part for the EU as it spreads messages that could affect its relationship with Turkey, which longed to obtain membership and has been unwillingly involved and caught in the middle of the European Refugee Crisis due to its location. While Turkey has cared more about this relationship than the EU in the past, there has been a noticeable increase in interest from the EU because of its desire to cooperate and collaborate on an approach to the refugee crisis. Therefore, it can be argued that the EU communication strategies, such as the press releases and statements available on its website, could be used to improve bilateral relations with Turkey.

European Union-Turkish Relations

Turkey has been considered an entrance into Europe for migrants since the end of the Cold War. During the late 1990s, Turkey became defined as a transit country where migrants only had to first declare asylum before relocating to the West (Içduygu & Keyman, 2000, p. 386). However, Turkey did not establish a method of officially documenting these asylum seekers, which now negatively affects their EU negotiations.

Turkey's involvement in illegal migration to Europe has continued and increased since the European Refugee Crisis and threat of ISIS. Kirişci (2003) states that the EU wants Turkey to abide by their migration standards and processes. Since Turkey is a candidate country, it is still expected to follow through on the EU Justice and Home Affair (JHA) document that addresses migration and cooperation (p. 80). This forces Turkey to follow the values and laws of an institution it has not been accepted into. In fact, Kirişci (2003) states, "Turkish officials fear a situation where cooperation with the EU will not be accompanied by membership, leaving Turkey exposed and forced to deal alone with difficult problems associated with asylum and irregular migration" (p. 81). At the same time, the EU is aware of how crucial Turkey's cooperation is today. The EU does not hold as much power over Turkey with its membership negotiations anymore because without Turkey's assistance, Europe will be overwhelmed with the huge number of refugees entering the West.

Framing

As the European refugee crisis is arising, the EU institution, along with the media, is sharing messages through certain frames. According to Kim (2016), "crisis managers choose appropriate response strategies to not only frame the crisis type but also change publics' perception of the organization in crisis" (p.36). Therefore, the press releases and statements on the situations that are posted on the EU website, are expected to be written in a way that favors EU values, perspectives, and responsibilities. When the international audience wants to hear official messages from large global organizations and the EU, they would be able to frame their actions and responses. Entman (1993) stated that the repetition of frames, or the frames most "salient" within the media cause the audience to perceive those themes and topics as the most important aspects about the information presented. A lack of a certain frame or topics help the audience to

determine that frame or topic is not that important.

This concept of framing was further developed by de Vreese (2005). A code sheet was created to identify the generic and issue-specific frames in the information subsidies. These press releases and announcements were referred to as information subsidies because sources provide newsworthy information for the media. De Vreese used this coding process in order to study how the frames are affecting readers' perspective of the issue. The generic frames are composed of conflict, human interest, attribution of responsibility, morality, and economic consequence (de Vreese, 2005, p. 56). The coding sheet developed for this study used de Vreese's generic frames.

Using framing theory, this study analyzes the communication strategies of the EU during the time of the refugee crisis. It aims to determine the main frames most prevalent in the EU messages targeting EU-member and non-member countries. The messages include press releases and official statements. Following from the literature review, the following questions are proposed:

RQ1: Is there one voice or consistent message disseminated by the European Union in regards to the refugee crisis?

RQ2: How is the EU framing the crisis on its official website?

RQ3: How is the EU framing Turkey's response to the crisis?

RQ4: Is the refugee crisis affecting Turkey's EU membership status? If so, how?

III. Methods

This study analyzes the way in which the EU is communicating to external publics in regards to the European refugee crisis and its relations with Turkey. The EU consists of several different institutions and bodies. Among many activities that these organizations can do, this study focused on the press releases and statements published by the EU.

On the EU's official website, there is a newsroom page that publishes the press releases and statements from 12 different sources and European bodies, including but not limited to the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Commission, the Court of Justice of the EU, and the European Central Bank. After a thorough analysis of the role and responsibilities of each of these institutions, as explained on the EU's official website, the communications of the European Council were considered to be the most appropriate and relevant to the purpose of this study.

The European Council consists of the heads of state or government of EU countries, EU Commission President, and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (European Union, 2016). Since the Council officially became a part of the EU in 2009, it has consistently been responsible for bringing EU leaders together "to set the EU political agenda" as well as to set "the EU's common foreign & security policy, taking into account EU strategic interests and defence implications" (European Union, 2016). Since the purpose of this study is to answer questions about EU official communications and frames regarding the refugee crisis, a large international security concern, the European Council was most appropriate. While the EU Council does not create any laws, it is representative of all the EU member countries and also applies EU values and principles when determining the EU's "overall direction and political priorities" (European Union, 2016). The frames identified in these press releases and statements will address whether or not strong relations with Turkey is a "political priority" for the EU.

This study analyzed a total of 22 press releases, statements and speeches, which are also known as information subsidies, posted in the European Council newsroom for the period between February 1, 2016, and March 31, 2016 (two full months). This timeframe was selected because during these two months Turkey and the EU met, negotiated an agreement, and planned action for the migration crisis. The official messages and frames disseminated by the European Council would indicate the EU's "political priorities," what the European Council and EU consider most important, at this crucial time.

This qualitative content analysis was conducted to identify the main themes that were used to explain, to the international community, the events and actions taken by the European community in response to the

refugee crisis. This study also aims to explore if the European Council is clearly communicating its intentions and if the actions that the organization has taken are appropriate and significant in times of such crisis. Lastly, the study addresses how the European Council communicates not only its own actions, but also the actions and responses from Turkey, a country that is directly involved in the migration crisis and seeking EU membership. This timeframe was chosen specifically to portray the EU's perception of Turkey during negotiations and international meetings.

The qualitative approach was based on de Vreese's research previously mentioned in the literature review. A code sheet, as shown in the Appendix, was created to find the generic frames listed in the literature as well as main topics (the refugee crisis, EU relations with a member country, or EU-Turkish relations). This method helped the author discover themes and trending topics from the 22 information subsidies and patterns in which the EU was framing them.

IV. Findings

This section describes the relevant information found from 22 press releases and announcements. Of the 22 coded for this study, 11 were about the overall topic of the European Refugee Crisis; 7 were about EU relations with Turkey; and 4 focused on relations between the institution of the EU and any of its member countries. The main topic of the European Refugee Crisis covers messages that described its actions and communications with countries outside of the EU, such as Syria. For example, the information subsidy, which was titled "EU pledges more than 3 billion Euros for Syrians in 2016 at the London conference," focused on the overall EU approach and response to the refugee crisis. In this press release, facts about the Syrian war were stated under the titles of the "hospitality and generosity of Syria's neighbors" and the EU's interest and responsibility, along with the rest of the global community "to save Syria" (European Council, 2016c). Other information subsidies about this main topic described "Council conclusions on migrant smuggling" or financial support for the crisis.

The information subsidies that focused on relations between the institution of the EU and any of its member countries were mostly either about the United Kingdom or Greece. During this time period, the UK had expressed concerns about the EU, and talks about a referendum were discussed. However, the President of the European Council addressed Prime Minister David Cameron and emphasized the European Council's desire for compromise and a unified organization, especially at this time of international crisis. In terms of the EU's relationship with Greece during February and March, the messages state that the European Council is in solidarity with Greece while the country experiences difficulties resulting from the migration crisis. These information subsidies about Greece usually referred back to the Schengen Evaluation Report, which concerns European border control. This report was submitted to the European Council by the European Commission, the body of the EU that creates policy proposals and implements Council of the EU decisions (European Union, 2015a).

The third main topic in the 22 information subsidies covers relations between the EU and Turkey. Most of these press releases and statements refer to the agreement by EU member states to send €3 billion to support Turkey. For example, in the information subsidy of "Refugee facility for Turkey: Member states agree on details of financing," the European Council not only describes the agreement but also includes information regarding the institution's approach to coordinating and working with Turkey during the refugee crisis. For instance, according to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands and the rotating President of the Council of the EU, "Europe is following up on its decision to make 3 billion euro available for the Turkey Refugee Facility and we will continue to work hard with our Turkish partners to turn this into concrete results" (European Council, 2016b). Another information subsidy discussed how "the European Union appreciates our good and growing cooperation with Turkey to prevent irregular migration" and that there has been an increase in "general momentum" in EU-Turkey relations lately (European Council, 2016r).

These information subsidies were also coded for tone, generic frames, and issue-specific frames. The majority of these information subsidies had a positive tone, meaning that the EU was discussing positive progress and a unified approach to handling the refugee crisis. None of the information subsidies were coded with a negative tone and only eight had a neutral tone. A neutral tone was assigned to language that simply stated facts about the situation and crisis rather than any progress or international agreement.

Overall, the attribution of responsibility was the generic frame that was identified the most in the press releases and statements from the European Council. This frame labels a group or individual responsible for either solving or causing the problem described by the source. For these 22 information subsidies, the European Council and EU were consistently accepting responsibility for helping the international community and were also explaining that the individual members of the EU were also responsible, not just the institution. For example, in the information subsidy of "Council conclusions on migrant smuggling," the Council not only lists all of the actions and duties of the European Council moving forward when addressing the migration crisis, but also the Council directly invites member states to a long list of suggested actions, such as to "accelerate the process of a systematic registration," or "cooperate with the Commission," "enhance effective and sustainable return of migrants who are not entitled to international protection," and also "significantly increase multidisciplinary cooperation within Member states, cross-border cooperation between Member States and EU agencies and cooperation with third party countries" (European Council, 2016h). These would all be considered solutions or attempts to solve/improve the European Refugee Crisis.

The conflict frame was also salient within these information subsidies. This frame emphasized the issues resulting from the Syria War and the humanitarian concerns that exist within the international community. Only 4 out of the total 22 information subsidies framed morality as the most salient frame, meaning that while humanitarian aid concerns were prevalent, especially in terms of explaining why the EU was giving financial support, it wasn't the main theme. It also wasn't directly related to "moral prescriptions" as described in the literature review (de Vreese, 2005). In other words, the EU and the European Council would only briefly describe the European values and principles that guided the implemented policies. Generally, the messages would refer back to humanitarian assistance as an "urgent global responsibility" (European Council, 2016h).

V. Discussion

To understand how the EU is communicating about the European refugee crisis, Turkey's actions and its connection to Turkey's membership negotiations with the EU, this study presented four research questions.

Earlier in this study it was discussed that the EU is composed of several institutions and bodies. On the EU official website, there was a newsroom that listed publications of all these segments of the EU for months and a link to their archives. Regarding RQ 1, "Is there one voice or consistent message disseminated by the EU in regards to the refugee crisis?" this format and structure of the EU and its newsrooms initially suggested that there might be numerous voices for the EU. Overall, these institutions all abide by the established European values, principles, and policies; however, there are branches that focus on only one topic and may not address as many concepts as the European Council's press releases. For example, the European Investment Bank could communicate about the European Refugee Crisis and Turkey's involvement differently because this part of the EU is focused on "boosting Europe's potential in terms of jobs and growth, supporting action to mitigate climate change, and promote EU policies outside the EU" (European Union, 2015b). This differs from the European Council's responsibilities; therefore, the frames within the official communications of these EU institutions may be different. For instance, in an information subsidy presented by the European Council, a financial deal that includes the European Investment Bank (EIB) is described and ends with the statement, "President Hoyer from EIB will present the details later today" (European Council, 2016d). The details were not presented on the website of the European Council.

While the initial findings and data collection process suggested numerous voices and messages coming from the EU, the European Council's communications consistently mentioned "we" and a collective decision and approach to the migration issues. This "we" refers to all of the EU Member states. The European Council communications are from the collective EU institution.

It became clear in the analysis of these 22 information subsidies that the European Council acted as a unified body of EU Member states and all decisions were by consensus. For example, the president of the European Council stated, "This discussion has only reinforced our commitment to building a European consensus on migration. To do that, we must first avoid a battle among plans A, B and C. It makes no sense at all, as it creates divisions within the EU. Instead, we must look for a synthesis of different approaches" (European Council, 2016g). The president directly says, "There is no good alternative to a comprehensive European plan." This quote indicates that the EU is striving to achieve a unified, clear approach rather than allowing individual member states to create their own solution to the migration crisis. This concept of a unified

approach and voice in international affairs is reflected in other information subsidies. For instance, in "European Council Conclusions on migration" in February, it was stated, "the comprehensive strategy agreed in December will only bring results if all its elements are pursued jointly and if the institutions and Member states act together." While these information subsidies might suggest there has been an attempt by member states to form individual strategies and policies (plans A, B and C), the EU does not value or support that position. Numerous voices or policies are not acknowledged by the EU or even described to the international community in official EU communications. President Donald Tusk repeatedly mentions that "Europe will be there to assist" those in need; this is a collective voice with a common plan and interest.

Regarding RQ 2, the salient frames in the European Council messages were analyzed. As mentioned in the Findings section of this study, the generic frame of attribution of responsibility was identified the most. According to framing theory, a frame suggests what is most important within the information subsidy. Therefore, this study argues that the European Council is using these official communications to strategically explain its involvement and dedication to solving or improving the refugee crisis in Europe. The European Council consistently described conclusions from meetings with member states and surrounding countries that were affected by the crisis and the "next steps" which were the upcoming actions that would be completed by the institution after the meeting. The institution is trying to demonstrate or communicate with international communities that the problem is not being ignored and the conflict, while extensive, is a considerable part of present and future EU policies, communications, and decisions.

For example, after the agreement to send €3 billion to the EU refugee facility for Turkey was established, the information subsidy stated what would happen next as a result: "The agreement allows the Commission to adapt its decision establishing the Refugee Facility for Turkey and to prepare concrete measures for providing assistance to refugees in Turkey from early 2016" (European Council, 2016b). This is significant because it makes definitive and measurable progress; since the Council agreed, the Commission can make it an official policy.

The European Council is strategic in its messages, so the audience of these messages will be able to understand the EU's position on the crisis. The EU not only voiced concern about the crisis, but the institution also considers the crisis to be the responsibility of the EU to actively aid and fix in anyway possible. The EU does not place blame on any other institution through the attribution of responsibility frame. Rather, it just discusses how the refugee crisis is a result of the Syrian war. The information subsidy specifically mentioned, "EU pledges more than €3 billion for Syrians in 2016 at the London Conference," so "we (the EU) share with the entire international community the responsibility to save Syria, for the sake of its citizens and the whole region" (2016). While Syria is not even a member of the EU, the organization is actively responding to and assisting the people from that country.

While the European Council places significant emphasis on aiding citizens around the world, it sometimes tends to focus on European policies, law, and people. For example, many times the concept of protecting the borders and reducing illegal migration into Europe is mentioned within information subsidies that discuss the effects of the refugee crisis. These are considered issue-specific frames, according to De Vreese (2005). Issue-specific frames deal with issues that are extremely relevant and related to the main topic of the information subsidy (the European refugee crisis) and also reoccur within the information subsidies. The repetition of issue-specific frames signify that the particular issue is important and a factor that could affect EU's approach to the refugee crisis.

Regarding RQ3, "How is the EU framing Turkey's response to the crisis?" this study found that the European Council's official press releases describe Turkey as being an extremely helpful and important part of the European strategy. The information subsidies that addressed Turkey's involvement in the refugee crisis did not use the generic frame of conflict in which Turkey might have been blamed for causing problems. As stated in the literature review, the absence of a generic frame is almost as important to the reader as the presence of a frame. In this case of Turkey, the lack of the frame indicates that there is a lack of conflict between the EU and Turkey at this moment. The Turkish government was consistently commended for its "dedication and engagement" in this issue and appreciated for its "good and growing cooperation" to prevent irregular migration (European Council, 2016l). The president of the European Council refers to specific actions taken by Turkey during the crisis, such as "Turkey's recent decision to open its labour market for refugees." It also comments, "We (the EU) welcome stepped up efforts of the Turkish coastguard, intensified police controls to combat human trafficking and the tightening of visa requirements" (2016l). The EU is collectively thankful for the actions of the Turkish community and government.

Communications between the EU institution and Turkey were almost always framed positively. The issue-specific frames were consistently referring to cooperation between the two with significant agreement. The lack of the conflict frame in regard to Turkey's responses, as discussed in framing theory, indicates that this is not an important concept. The reader of these messages would understand that the cooperation and strengthening of Turkey/EU relations was more dominant in EU communication strategies and policies. This cooperation even extended beyond migration negotiations and onto other areas of Turkish concern. The EU spoke of standing in solidarity with Turkey against terrorism, and how "events like these (the attack in Ankara) also remind us that our cooperation goes way beyond migration. It is about working together on our common challenges" (European Council, 2016l).

Regarding RQ 4, "Is the refugee crisis affecting Turkey's EU membership status? And if so, how?" this paper argues that Turkey's EU membership status is being positively impacted by the refugee crisis, even though this is an on-going event and negotiations are long and complicated. This means that the increase in discussions between the EU and Turkey, and large common interest and goal seem to be beneficial to Turkey in negotiations. For example, after the EU began sending €3 billion to the refugee facility, "work has advanced on visa liberalization and in the accession talks, including the opening of Chapter 17 last December" (European Council, 2016u). This information subsidy explained every point of the EU-Turkey refugee agreement, known as a "one-for-one" deal. According to CNN, this deal would send one Syrian refugee that had illegally entered Greece back to Turkey. In return, one approved Syrian refugee would enter Europe, legally, through Turkey (Ap, Tuysuz, McLaughlin, & Hume, 2016). The information subsidy explicitly describes how Turkey is assisting the EU and relieving some illegal migration challenges that the EU was facing and how in turn, the commitment of the EU was "re-energised". Several other chapters of EU negotiations, which are long descriptions of the areas of concern that need to be addressed and discussed amongst the EU and Turkey, will be opened and negotiated again. While it is possible that the situation in Turkey could change guickly, as crises unfolded, there was significant progress in negotiations during the timeframe of this study. Before Turkey and the EU agreed upon the one-for-one deal, there were still about 30 chapters that had to be negotiated.

VI. Conclusion

The findings of this study did not support the thesis statement. The expectation was to find that Turkey was not cooperating with the EU, and the EU was framing Turkey and its actions in a negative way. As a result, it was predicted that this would negatively affect Turkey's relationship with the EU and decrease membership negotiations. Instead, this study found that the EU was appreciative of Turkey and its cooperation and applauding its actions regarding the European refugee crisis. This in turn, had a positive effect in its EU membership negotiations.

For the most part, the European Council was strategically using these messages to communicate the effort and commitment of the institution to international publics. This is important because when a reader interprets these messages, especially a reader who would like Turkey to be a part of the EU, it is possible that a positive brand is formed about the organization of the EU, even in a time of crises. As discussed in the literature review, an organization's ability to address the needs of its stakeholders (EU member states and citizens) even in a difficult situation could affect the formation of a nation's or organization's brand. In the case of the EU, the organization was able to effectively communicate with its publics, uphold the interests, and shared values of its audiences through its public diplomacy. This study supports the idea that the EU successfully uses the soft power of public diplomacy to communicate its position on particular issues (Wang 2006) and to maintain a strong image among its publics.

Since the events in the European community are unstable, the official communications of the institution could change. However, this study argues that the EU is actively trying to help all those affected by the Syrian War and ISIS by establishing strong relationships, partnerships, and policies, and then informing the international public of its progress through solid, honest, and official communications. The EU recognizes the public interest in this matter and the important role and duties that the institution must uphold to satisfy and aid public needs.

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Appendix: Code-sheet

Variable Name	Variable Label	Variable Label		
CODER NAME	Name of person coding	1=Tara 2= Other		
NUMBER	Number of subsidy being coded	0-22		
DATE	Date information was published	Mm/dd/yy		
SOURCE	Story location (Which website was this article found on?)	1=European Council		
STORY	Story type	1=Press release 2=Speech 3=Statement 4=Other		
LENGTH	Length (word count)	0000-9998		
HFOCUS	Headline Focus	1= European Refugee Crisis (General topic) 2= The institution of the EU relations with EU member states 3=EU/Turkey Relations: The EU's relationship and foreign policy with Turkey, rather than member countries, regarding the refugee crisis 4=Other		
LTONE	Lead Tone (Lead is the first paragraph of the story. Tone refers, in particular, to whether the language reflects an effort or intention by EU to establish better relationships)	1=Negative 2=Positive 3=Neutral		

MAIN TOPIC	Body focus (What exactly the article is discussing or announcing)	1=European Refugee Crisis 2=EU relations with EU member states 3=EU/Turkey Relations 4=EU policies/values 5=Other		
Generic Frame Present	The generic frame(s) that is/are present or salient, separating each with a comma. Ex. 1, 3, 5.	1=Conflict Frame indicates a conflict between individuals, groups, institutions or countries. 2=Human Interest There is an emphasis on an individual, his/her story and emotions while describing an event, issue or problem. 3=Responsibility There is an individual or group that is clearly responsible for causing or solving the problem described. 4=Morality An event is described and interpreted by religious principles or "moral prescriptions" 5=Economic Consequence This frame presents the issue, event or problem in terms of how the people, region, country, or institution will be affected economically. De Vreese, C. H. (2005). News framing: Theory and typology.Information design journal+document design, 13(1), 51-62.		
OTHER (non-common) frames or issues	Any other frame that seems apparent in the information subsidy and is important to note			
ISSUE-SPECIFIC Frames	A reoccurring issue in the information	1=Cooperation 2=Illegal migration 3=Concern about conflictive relationship with other country specified or partnership/ cooperation with specific country of the EU in relation to the refugee crisis 5=Other (Describe)		
Important Quotes	A quote that explains a specific issue or supports a theme/frame and is relevant to explaining the research.	Include quote and source.		

Analysis of Representations of African Americans in Non-linear Streaming Media Content

Tony Weaver Jr.

Strategic Communications
Elon University

Abstract

Nonlinear distribution methods have changed the way that media content is consumed, with viewers now able to watch entire series in a few sittings. To develop a better understanding of how African Americans are portrayed on nonlinear distribution platforms, a content analysis was performed on the top five shows from Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime. Findings suggest that online streaming platforms offer more diversity than traditional television, although underrepresentation and misrepresentation remain major issues in this space.

I. Introduction

"Unarmed Black Teen Shot in the Chest in Front of His Mother;" "NYPD Slays Unarmed Black Teen;" and "Missouri Police Shooting of Unarmed Black Teen Sparks Days of Protest." Headlines like these have become common in the last five years. These headlines may be dismissed as isolated incidents as people scroll across television screens, but the list is much longer: Trayvon Martin, Renisha McBride, Jordan Davis, Kendrec McDade, Timothy Stansbury Jr., Sean Bell, Orlando Barlow, Aaron Campbell, Steven Washington, Ronald Madison, James Brissette, Ezell Ford, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, John Crawford, and Travares McGill. Each name represents an African American killed by police, security guards, or neighborhood watchmen around the country. Together, they are evidence of a culture that systematically devalues the lives of African Americans. The loss of these lives has awakened protesters around the country. Communities are demanding accountability, politicians are advocating gun reform, and citizens are crying out against militarization of local police forces. However, there is a larger problem that is not being addressed, representation issues of African Americans.

At first glance it may be difficult to see a connection between representation issues and police brutality. However, research illustrates a large relationship between media portrayals and individual attitudes. In 1976, communications researcher Gerbner conducted a large-scale research project titled "The Cultural Indicators Project." The project was commissioned by The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence to analyze the effects of television violence on audiences. The study led to cultivation theory, which primarily states, "The more time people spend living in the television world, the more likely they are to believe social reality portrayed on television" (Gerbner & Gross, 2002).

Keywords: diversity, media, representation, new media, fourth screen

Email: tweaver2@elon.edu

This undergraduate project was conducted as a partial requirement of a research course in communications.

When the initial Cultural Indicators Project was completed in the late 1970s, people understood that television was becoming a central part of American culture (Gerbner & Gross, 2002). Since then, television has become more central to American culture and cultures around the world. According to the Nielsen Corporation, Americans watch over 250 billion hours of television annually and over 96% of households in America have at least one television (Nielsen, 2016).

These facts become problematic when partnered with research about portrayals of African Americans on television. A 2000 study found that African Americans were portrayed negatively more than any other ethnicities in prime-time television. If cultivation theory states that television portrayals have a profound effect on an individual's perceptions of the world, and existing research shows that African Americans are portrayed negatively, the result would undoubtedly be widespread negative perceptions of African Americans (Mastro & Greenberg, 2000).

While traditional television that prior studies have focused on is certainly still a cultural phenomenon, the emergence of the fourth screen on mobile platforms has created a media landscape where non-linear distribution methods are able to thrive. Because they are new, little research has been done on the content being distributed on these platforms. This paper used cultivation theory to analyze the portrayals of African Americans in nonlinear distribution platforms and get a comprehensive view of the representation issues in a modern context.

II. Literature Review

To understand the problems with portrayals of Blacks, the literature review focused on cultivation theory, issues of misrepresentation and underrepresentation, historical portrayals of Blacks and stereotypes, and the shifted media landscape that has been shaped by the mobile device screen, often called the fourth screen.

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory posits that since television occupies a central role in American culture, it is more influential than other forms of media. It posits that television shapes people's attitudes and beliefs rather than directly affecting behavior (Gerbner & Gross, 2002).

Cultivation theory generally uses qualitative and/or quantitative content analysis. Early studies through the Cultural Indicators Project created coding parameters that classified characters as good or bad. As more studies were completed, coding parameters became more refined. By 1996, cultivation experiments had adopted methods to examine character's tone and the characteristics of the programming itself. In a similar way, this study created quantitative coding parameters based on properties of the examined programming.

The effects of cultivation theory vary with individuals. The difference in the degree of cultivation among many television viewers is called the cultivation differential (Gerbner & Gross, 2002). The cultivation differential is caused by a variety of factors that can affect an individual's cultivation, such as the amount of television that is watched. Individuals who watch large amounts of television are referred to as heavy viewers, while individuals who watch limited amounts of television are referred to as light viewers. According to the theory, heavy viewers are influenced more than light viewers.

Another factor is the environment of individuals. People who live in more dangerous neighborhoods are more susceptible to portrayals of violent acts. Gender was also determined to be a factor, due to the portrayals of women as victims; they were more likely to embrace beliefs pertaining to violence (Gerbner & Gross, 2002). Due to the opportunities for information exchanges in conversations after group viewings, individuals in group viewings have lower chances of cultivation than those who watch content alone. Age is also a factor. Young children who lack the ability to fully comprehend what is going on are less likely to be subject to cultivation. Finally, individuals' level of familiarity with the situation portrayed affects their chance of cultivation. Individuals who did not have personal experience with the portrayed realities were more likely to experience cultivation because they relied on television to inform them.

A majority of the factors referenced in cultivation differential were developed because opponents of the theory felt it did not take into account the many variables that could affect a person being cultivated.

Gerbner asserts that while these variables do play a part in a person's likelihood to experience cultivation, the amount of television a person watches is the most important factor (Gerbner & Gross, 1972).

Representation in Depth

The idea of representation is not a recent creation. Both Plato and Aristotle believed that one of mankind's distinguishing traits is its ability to create representations (Nehamas, 2012). While their understanding of representation was rooted in language and literature, they believed that representation has a direct relation to the culture and society that created them. When talking about media, Beach (2016) defines representation as "the ways in which the media portray particular groups, communities, experiences, ideas, or topics from a particular ideological or value perspective." For example, the 2014 film *American Sniper* that depicts a conflict between American soldiers and foreign enemies was criticized for its poor representation of foreigners, because it humanized the American soldiers who acted in the majority of movies killing people, and offered no redeeming qualities for their opposition.

Media misrepresentation is the product of society. The media content created in one culture inevitably bears the values of that culture. For example, media programs produced in the 1940s and 1950s, such as *Amos and Andy*, were strongly rooted in racist stereotypes of the era, and sexist stereotypes were found in content produced in the American Temperance Era.

When representation has negative ramifications, it generally occurs in two ways, misrepresentation and underrepresentation. Misrepresentation occurs when groups, communities, and ideas are wrongly portrayed. When certain groups and communities are systematically excluded from representations, media underrepresentation occurs. Many minority groups suffer from representation issues; however, the African American community has a unique history with representation.

Representation of African Americans

African Americans have a relationship to American history that cannot be replicated by any other minority groups. The reality of slavery and the Jim Crow Era that followed placed the African American community subject to misrepresentation in mainstream American culture even before the modern idea of media started.

For decades, African Americans have been depicted negatively in popular media (Drummond, 1990). African American men have been stereotyped as violent and impulsive sexual predators (Watson, 2009). African Americans were portrayed negatively not only in reality TV and scripted television shows, but in news outlets as well. They were more consistently shown as being poorly dressed and being restrained by figures of authority (Entman, 1992). Overall, media outlets created a narrative that portrayed African Americans as lazy, violent individuals who were prone to crime (Entman, 1990). Despite the inaccuracies of these stereotypes, prolonged exposure to them can create an environment that perpetuates them (Entman & Gross, 2008). Media misrepresentation has been shown to cause cultural stigma, and capable of causing members of stereotyped groups to model behavior that did not originally exist (Dong & Murrillo, 2007). These beliefs are even more significant in areas where direct interaction with African Americans is lacking (Fujioka, 1999).

Negative representations of African Americans have been used as the foundation for a variety of stereotypes about African American people.

African American Stereotypes

The Mammy stereotype is the description of a Black woman who works as a nanny or housekeeper (West, 1995). One of the earliest depictions of the mammy stereotype comes from the 1852 novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* It is rooted in the real-life experiences of female slaves who were domestic workers in White households, where they cooked, cleaned, and were responsible for taking care of the master's children. Generally the mammy was portrayed as an old, overweight, dark-skinned woman. As time passed, the mammy stereotype evolved. In 1889, Aunt Jemima was a clear depiction of the mammy image. The television sitcoms *Maude*, *That's my Mama, Gimme a Break*, and *What's Happening* continued to use this archetype.

The Mandingo stereotype is based on rhetoric used during slavery asserting that Black men were primitive and hypersexual. The rhetoric that characterized Black men as brute was used even after the emancipation of slaves to further separate Blacks from Whites, and to discourage mixed race relationships. Positioning Black men as sex-crazed fiends made it easier to enforce accusations of rape and murder,

contributing a rise in lynchings. The Mandingo stereotype exists in modern day media in the form of thugs, gangsters, or other Black male characters who lack empathy, and only show a penchant for violence and sexual activity.

The independent Black woman, an archetypal type of Black woman, has been depicted as being narcissistic and emasculating to men in her life (Harris, 2015). This stereotype is closely related to the angry Black woman stereotype. Rather than responding to unfair treatment in anger, however, the independent Black woman behaves selfishly to serve her own personal interest and creates a reality where she does not need anyone to provide for her because she provides for herself. Ultimately, the idea of "a strong independent black woman who don't need no man" is prevalent in modern media content.

The Jezebel stereotype presents Black women as sexually promiscuous seductresses (Mitchell & Herring, 1998). In many ways, this stereotype was meant to be the antithesis of the submissive and pure elements associated with the ideal Victorian woman. The insatiable sexual appetite of the Jezebel was used as justification for sexual assault of African American women throughout slavery and the Reconstruction Era.

The Drug User/Dealer stereotype emerges from media reporting tactics used during the War on Drugs (Wise, 2001). Under President Richard Nixon, the War on Drugs disproportionately targeted African Americans, and was used to disrupt Black communities and Black community groups, such as the Black Panthers. This stereotype found its life originally via news broadcasts, where African Americans were disproportionately shown being arrested.

The Financially Needy stereotype is also referred to as the welfare queen stereotype. Studies show that media portrayals of poverty lead to a dramatic overestimation of African Americans living under the poverty line (Levin, 2013).

The Magical Negro stereotype is a supporting stock character in American films. It references a Black character, usually male, who comes to the aid of a White film protagonist (Kempley, 2003). The Magical Negro usually has some form of special social understanding or power.

The Angry Black Woman stereotype is derivative of the Sapphire stereotype. In the 1930's radio show *Amos'n'Andy*, there was a character named Sapphire who was known for nagging and emasculating her husband.

The Athlete stereotype is a derivative of the Mandingo stereotype. Rather than focusing on the Black man's enhanced sexual appetite, the focus is placed on his advanced physical attributes. Once again, the Black man is depicted like an animal to give credence to ideas of him having superhuman ability. This includes stereotypes of Black men running fast or being strong.

The Rapper/Dancer stereotype portrays African Americans as being automatically endowed with the ability to dance or rap. Because the majority of the performers in the rap industry are Black, shows like *Soul Train* showcases the rhythmic abilities of some Blacks and uses true events to extrapolate a false reality.

Criminality has always been an element in misrepresentation of the Black community. Historically, criminality was one of the excuses for why slaves should be kept by their masters. Historic precedence for demonizing Blacks and calling them immoral, along with disproportionate coverage of news stories with Black perpetrators, creates a culture where Blacks are stereotyped as criminals regardless of wrongdoing.

Though language itself is a social construct that is constantly evolving, Blacks are consistently stereotyped as being unable to speak proper English, and instead reverting to ghetto slang. This stereotype relies on the idea that slang is an indication of a lack of intelligence rather than the employment of culturally bound colloquialisms. It also fails to take into account that African American vernacular English is a recognized dialect with a complete set of linguistic rules as mainstream English.

The Effects of Misrepresentation

Research shows that the distorted portrayals of African Americans found in the media cause general antagonism toward African American males, lack of identification, or sympathy with African Americans, and exaggerated views related to criminality and violence in the African American community (Kang, 2005; Ramasubramanian, 2011; Entman & Gross, 2008). Phelps et al. (2000) found, regardless of conscious reports about racial attitudes, Whites were shown to have increased activity in the regions of their brain associated with experiencing fear when they saw unfamiliar African Americans. One study found that United States citizens

support harsher laws if those laws are designed to imprison more African Americans (Hetey & Eberhardt, 2014).

These negative effects translate into institutional consequences (Dong & Murrillo, 2007). Media misrepresentation has been linked to African Americans receiving less attention from doctors, harsher sentencing by judges (Rachlinski, Johnson, Wistrich, & Guthrie, 2009), lower likelihood of being hired for a job or admitted to school, shorter life expectancy (Entman, 2006), lower odds of getting loans, and higher likelihood of being shot by police (Greenwald, Oakes, & Hoffman, 2003).

These portrayals also cause African Americans to have reduced self-esteem (Tan & Tan, 1979), low expectations for themselves (Martin, 2008), and implicit bias against members of their own race (Schmader, Johns, & Forbes, 2008). It has also been proven to increase domestic abuse rates of African American women, and cause African American men to underachieve on standardized tests and in job interviews (Schmader et al., 2008).

Communications researchers Mastro and Greenberg (2000) suggested that immediate work be undertaken in order to address representation issues. However, according to a replication of that study performed 10 years later, African Americans are still being misrepresented and negatively stereotyped in the same ways (Turner, et.al, 2010).

The Emergence of the Fourth Screen

Cultivation theory posits that television is central to American culture. This was true during the 1970s when the theory was created, and in the present, too. However, in the last decade, the media landscape has shifted to accommodate the fourth screen. The television was considered the second screen when it was introduced, with its predecessor, the silver screen being referred to as the first screen. After personal computers became accessible to most consumers, they were referred to as the third screen. Now an increasing number of people access media content through the fourth screen, which refers to any form of mobile device capable of accessing media content. The term could refer to smartphones, net books, tablets, mini-tablets, smart watches, and even augmented reality devices, such as Google Glass. The fourth screen revolutionized the media industry because it made non-linear content distribution more conveniently accessible. Generally, television served as the primary source for most media content being produced, and aside from on-demand services or DVDs, consumers would have to cross their fingers and hope they'd catch their favorite show through television. However, when technology enabled people to access media content on their own schedule, distribution methods began to accommodate that shift. The first Apple iPhone was released in the same year that Netflix began streaming.

Once streaming platforms started to gain momentum, media content began to be consumed liked never before through computers and mobile devices. Popular TV shows, such as *Seinfeld*, *Southpark*, and *Scrubs*, which consisted of hundreds of episodes that aired over the course of decades, were now capable of being watched completely over the course of a few weeks. In addition to the new distribution of branded properties, websites like *YouTube*, *Vimeo*, and *NewGrounds* made it possible for both amateur and independent professional content creators to amass large audiences. Pieces of media content such as Psy's "Gangnam Style" and Rick Astley's "Never Gonna Give You Up" were given a life mostly on the fourth screen that far exceeded what they would have experienced on any other platform.

Nonlinear distribution methods have changed the way that media content is consumed. Rather than tuning into the television for a few hours a day, viewers are now able to watch entire shows in one sitting if they choose to. This new culture of "binge" watching has created a phenomenon similar to the heavy viewers that Gerbner asserted were most vulnerable to cultivation.

III. Methods

Sample Selection

Due to their majority market share, Netflix, Hulu Plus, and Amazon Prime were the streaming platforms that were selected for this study. For each platform, the top five most popular live actions, scripted series were analyzed. Amazon Prime and Hulu Plus both had programming that was referenced as their most

popular content on their website and in their marketing materials. However, Netflix's most popular content was not consistent throughout their promotional materials. Instead of using Netflix statistics, this study relied on third party research by the marketing firm, RBC Capital Markets, when it determined top five series. At the end, the following shows were selected:

Table 1: Selected programming for analysis

Streaming platform	Most popular programming	
Netflix	Narcos, The Walking Dead, Orange is the New Black, Friends, Breaking Bad	
Hulu Plus	Seinfeld, Brooklyn Nine Nine, The Mindy Project, Empire, Law and Order SVU	
Amazon Prime	The Man in the High Castle, Downton Abbey, Vikings, Red Oaks, Hand of God	

For each of the 15 series, four episodes were analyzed: the beginning of the series, the most recently released episode of the series, and two randomly selected episodes. These episodes were selected based on the belief that analyzing the first aired episode, and most recent episodes of the show would allow the majority of the main cast to be shown, and two randomly selected episodes would allow for any extras or side characters to make appearances. The selection process lead to 60 episodes (See Appendix I).

Stereotype Parameters

The content analysis focused on identifying stereotypical portrayals based on the writings of multiple media professionals as shown below:

- 1) Mammy/Servant: An obese, dark-skinned woman with broad features who worked in the master's house, often serving as nanny, housekeeper, and cook (West, 1995).
- 2) Mandingo/Savage Hyper-sexual Black man with an insatiable appetite for White women (Malebranche, 1997).
- 3) Independent Black Woman: A Black woman who is selfish and emasculating toward men in her life.
- 4) Jezebel: A seductive, manipulative, Black woman unable to control her sexual drives (Mitchell & Herring, 1998).
- 5) Drug User/Drug Dealer: A portrayal where a Black character is shown to be a drug user or salesperson.
- 6) Financially Needy: A portrayal where a Black character is depicted as not having the financial means to take care of themselves.
- 7) Magical Negro: A portrayal where a Black character serves as the solution to a White protagonist's problems.
- 8) Angry Black Woman: A portrayal used where a Black woman is aggressive and emasculating.
- 9) Athlete: A portrayal where a Black character inexplicably has athletic and sports skills, and endeavors to be famous doing so.
- 10) Rapper/Dancer: A portrayal where a Black character inexplicably has skills in rap or dance, and endeavors to be famous doing so.
- 11) Criminal: A portrayal where a Black character has committed a crime or broken the law.
- 12) Ghetto/Inarticulate: A portrayal where Black characters speak with slang and can't express themselves.

For each episode, the following questions were asked: its diversity in terms of composition of actors;

show title and episode; episode length; streaming platform; writers of color; executive producers of color; The number of Black writers; the number of characters in the main cast; the number of Black characters in the main cast; the presence of any stereotypes.

If the last question above, the presence of any stereotypes, was answered yes, then a second set of questions about the portrayal of all stereotypical characters in each episode were asked:

- "What is the character's name?
- · How much is the character featured?
- Is the character of darker or lighter skin tone?
- What stereotypes were present?
- How were they presented?
- Notable quotes?

IV. Findings

The study found that streaming content in general suffered from the same misrepresentation of traditional television shows. Among 60 episodes examined, 32 (53.3%) were considered racially diverse because multiple races were represented among featured characters in its main cast, 49 (81.7%) had no writers of color, and 57 (95.0%) had no executive producers of color.

Of the content analyzed, 42 (70.0%) of the episodes contained no stereotypes. But this was possible because of lack of Black actors in the cast: 37 (61.7%) featured no Black people in their main cast, even though 57(95%) featured four or more characters as main casts.

When the author analyzed the remaining 18 episodes that contained stereotypes, they had 106 characters in total, including main ones. Among them, 44 characters (41.5%) were not of the stereotypical types, followed by 13 (12.3%) for Ghetto/Inarticulate; 12 for Criminal; 11 for Angry Black Woman, etc. (Refer to *Figure 1*.)

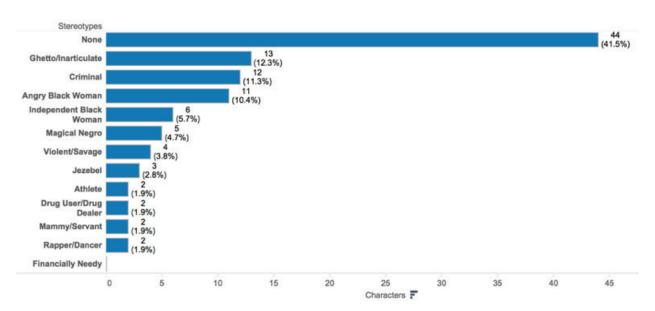


Figure 1. The pattern of stereotypes

Underrepresentation

The lack of writers and executive producers of color, in conjunction with the lack of Black characters, demonstrates that nonlinear distribution platforms suffer from issues of misrepresentation, but that there is also an issue of underrepresentation. The lack of Black characters, writers, and executive producers indicates that this underrepresentation is an issue that spans the entire content creation process.

The reasons for representation issues in the nonlinear space are unclear. One may hypothesize that since the majority of the content shown on these platforms was originally created for traditional television, representation problems still thrive in this space because it reuses dated content. This is supported by the fact that the majority of the shows analyzed were originally aired on television.

V. Discussion and Conclusions

Nonlinear streaming platforms are distinctly different from traditional television because of the viewing dynamics associated with them. When cultivation theory was originally introduced, a cultivation indicator showed that individuals consumed large amounts of media, but their choices for media content were restricted to the media offered on television broadcasts. However, nonlinear streaming platforms not only allow consumers to select their programming at their own leisure, but also insulate themselves with content that aligns perfectly with their beliefs.

In this content analysis, the stereotypes like ghetto/inarticulate, criminal, and angry Black woman were most frequently observed. As discussed earlier, these stereotypes are rooted in discriminatory practices. While it is already observed that repeated exposure to these stereotypes has negative ramifications, nonlinear streaming platforms have the capability of increasing these effects due to their availability and the advent of binge watching. When George Zimmerman killed Trayvon Martin in 2012, the 911 call featured him uttering the phrases, "This guy looks like he's up to no good, or he's on drugs or something." In 2014 when Ferguson protestors attempted to perform nonviolent protests, police officers arrived in riot gear, and used tear gas to disperse the crowd. While nonlinear streaming platforms do not cause these problematic beliefs, they possess the unparalleled ability to present media consumers with content that might lead to misconceptions of Blacks. This fact should be considered during the content creation process.

The Need for Proper Representation

An undeniable truth made clear by this study is the need for more accurate and nuanced portrayals of African Americans in the media. This necessity for increased representation applies not only to on-screen roles, but also all links in the media content creation chain. It can be argued that adding more African American producers and writers will decrease negative representations, due to their knowledge of the true breadth of the Black experience.

The stereotypes that were coded for this study were rooted in the literature. Misrepresentation of African Americans is so widespread that it has been observed for decades with little work completed to combat it. More than just stereotypes, these portrayals serve as a box that African Americans are expected to fit in. Terms like Mammy, Mandingo, Independent Black Woman, Jezebel, Drug User, Financially Needy, Magical Negro, Angry Black Woman, Athlete, Rapper, Criminal, and Ghetto represent current iterations of a long line of discriminatory social systems that predates nonlinear streaming platforms. While these forms of discrimination existed earlier, and still do in the era of nonlinear streaming platforms, cultivation theory can be used to reverse these stereotypes, and create a new norm that thrives on the principle of inclusivity rather than discrimination.

New Media, New Opportunities

New media undoubtedly offers an opportunity for independent content creators. Rather than relying on major studios or corporate entities, sites such as YouTube and Vimeo now offer an enticing avenue for building audiences. They have created an opportunity for some of the highest quality independent content, with web series like *The Guild* and *Video Game High School* being purchased by larger companies. New media's capability to empower content producers provides an opportunity to create more positive representations in media content. Organizations, such as Weird Enough Productions, Kweli TV, and Black and Sexy TV, have taken advantage of this shift to create content geared to remedy representation issues.

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Appendix: Episodes selected from 15 series for this study

Series	Episodes #	
Seinfeld	1,22,173, 180	
Law and Order SVU	1, 22, 93, 375	
Brooklyn Nine Nine	1, 14, 51, 52	
The Mindy Project	1, 6, 48, 78	
Empire	1, 9, 15, 22	
The Man in the High Castle	1, 2, 7, 10	
Downton Abbey	1, 35, 40, 51	
Vikings	1, 12,25, 29	
Red Oaks	1, 2, 8, 10	
Hand of God	1, 3, 4, 10	
Narcos	1, 2, 8, 10	
The Walking Dead	1, 19, 21, 67	
Orange is the New Black	1, 12, 17, 52	
Friends	1, 72, 163, 236	
Breaking Bad	1, 58, 59, 69	

Framing of Children in News Stories about U.S. Immigration from Latin America

Simone Jasper

Journalism and Spanish Elon University

Abstract

As immigration to the United States from Latin America has grown more prevalent in recent years, U.S. journalists have reported on the effects of the influx of Latinos entering the country, often detailing the changes in demographics and government policies. This study is a framing analysis exploring how newspapers in Arizona and Texas portrayed this immigration process. It was hypothesized that U.S. journalists framed child migrants as victims of economic and political instability in their countries of origin. Articles in newspapers from within 100 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border were analyzed using a coding technique to determine the framing of children.

I. Introduction

In recent years, immigration to the United States from Latin America has received national and international media attention. Specifically, U.S. journalists have reported on the effects of the influx of Latinos entering the country, such as changes in demographics and government policies. Journalists have also explained motivations for crossing the border, including committing criminal activities and escaping political or economic instability in Latin America. In states along the U.S.-Mexico border, regional newspapers have informed readers about the impacts of immigration in their communities. Thus, when a surge of people — including tens of thousands of children — crossed the border in 2014, several journalists in border states reported on the situation.

Between May and September 2014, more than 32,000 unaccompanied children crossed the U.S.-Mexico border, according to a U.S. Department of Homeland Security press release. Many of the children migrated from El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras. The violence and poverty in those countries pushed people to come to the United States to search for economic opportunities, the press release stated. The department identified parts of the Arizona and Texas borders as "risk areas" where people are likely to cross the border (Department of Homeland Security). In Arizona and Texas, at least eight newspapers are within 100 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. These newspapers published dozens of online articles about child migrants in 2014.

Communications researchers have analyzed media framing of immigration from Latin America, and some have concluded newspaper articles near the border associate immigrant groups with negative stereotypes, often characterizing them as criminals (Branton and Dunaway, "Slanted" 264; Branton and

Keywords: children, newspaper, framing theory, immigration, Latin America Email: sjasper@elon.edu

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Dunaway, "Spatial" 295). These studies did not focus on the framing of children, a demographic group prevalent in the most recent surge of immigration. Outside the academic realm, this topic has a general appeal because people who are Hispanic or Latino form more than 17 percent of the U.S. population, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates ("United States Quick Facts"). Some scholars argue media framing can influence public perceptions about groups of people, including immigrants from Latin America (Branton and Dunaway, "Slanted" 268; Soderlund 171, 175).

This paper analyzes how newspapers in Arizona and Texas portrayed the 2014 surge. The purpose of this study is to conduct a framing analysis of 10 newspaper articles published within 100 miles of the border with Mexico and find out how U.S. journalists represented children. This study aims to test the hypothesis that media coverage of immigration framed children from Latin America as victims of the economic and political instability of their countries of origin.

II. Literature Review

In the literature review, the author examined framing theory and how it was applied to immigration, child immigrants, and newspapers in border states.

Framing Theory

Framing theory is often used to understand how newspapers present themes. According to Entman, framing occurs when a communicator takes some aspects of an issue and makes them more noticeable for an audience. As he describes, communication frames explain problems, identify causes, and offer solutions (52). Some researchers believe media framing contributes to the way audiences perceive public policies, such as immigration law. But they also assert audiences tend to conform to their original views about topics. For example, Nelson, Oxley and Clawson studied university students' reactions to the framing of social welfare policies. They discovered participants with previous knowledge about the policies were likely to maintain existing beliefs when confronted with frames (234-35). In her essay about media framing of U.S. immigration laws, Soderlund makes a similar conclusion (176).

Framing of Immigration

Some academics argue wording affects the depiction of immigrants in news stories. For example, some maintain the word "illegal" evokes an association between immigration and criminality while the words "undocumented" and "unauthorized" do not carry this connotation. In their analysis of stories about immigration in both left- and right-leaning U.S. newspapers from 2007-2011, Merolla, Ramakrishnan and Haynes found all newspapers used "illegal" more frequently than the other two adjectives (793-94). Similarly, a Brookings report analyzed thousands of news stories about the immigration debate from 1980-2007 and found the majority fit within the frame of illegality (*A Report* 24). The Associated Press Stylebook — a guidebook for journalists — advises reporters to use the term "illegal" as an adjective when describing the immigration debate (Christian et al. 125-126). But Soderlund argues presenting immigrants as "illegal" influences perceptions about which groups belong in society (171, 175). According to 2015 Pew Research Center data, half of U.S. adults say immigrants make crime in the country worse (*Modern* 57).

Other research indicates the media put immigration in economic frames. In one analysis, researchers discovered newspapers and television news transcripts most often mentioned a troubled economy in Latin America as a cause for undocumented immigration. But the media rarely offered aiding the economy in Latin America as a solution for the situation (Kim et al. 307-08). Some academics reason that reports about people migrating for work perpetuate the sense of competition for U.S. jobs between people born inside and outside the country (Branton and Dunaway "Slanted" 268, Soderlund 175). Pew Research Center results also show 74 percent of survey respondents thought immigrants came to the United States for economic opportunities (*Modern* 59).

Framing of Children

Although communications researchers have analyzed both illegal and economic frames, they have not studied the media's framing of child migrants. But in a similar analysis, researchers examined media

frames of childhood obesity and found newspapers did not frame stories around societal-level factors that contributed to the problem. Instead, they framed childhood obesity as the responsibility of children and their families (Hawkins and Linvill 714). Another study garnered different results about media framing of children. In that study, researchers asked student participants to share their thoughts about social welfare policies after reading newspaper articles on them. Participants were less likely to support the policies when they were framed as threats to children (Nelson and Oxley 1052, 1055). According to Chavez, immigrant children receive some national attention in debates about citizenship. He contends these debates tend to focus on two groups: people who were brought to the United States as children and people born to undocumented parents (181). In 2013, children constituted nearly 20 percent of newly-arrived immigrants (*Modern* 41).

Newspapers in Border States

To analyze the results of media framing of immigration in border states, some researchers conducted framing analyses of U.S. newspapers near the Mexican border. For instance, Branton and Dunaway examined California newspapers within a one-year period. They found newspapers closer to Mexico were more likely to publish negative news and opinion pieces about immigration. They concluded media slanted stories to reflect the political climate near the border ("Slanted" 264). In a separate study of California newspapers, Branton and Dunaway discovered news outlets closer to the border published more articles about immigration and were more likely to cover immigration negatively. They concluded that newspapers near Mexico had economic motivations to deliver audiences local news that sensationalized crime ("Spatial" 295). Similarly, Kim et al. compared border-state newspaper articles with ones from other states. The researchers found a greater proportion of newspapers near the border mentioned negative consequences of undocumented immigration (306).

Hypotheses

This study analyzes newspaper articles written near the U.S.-Mexico border to determine how journalists framed children in stories about immigration. The literature review results in the following hypotheses:

- H1: Newspaper articles framed children as victims.
- H2: Newspaper articles referred to economic and political instability in Latin America to construct the victim frame.

III. Method

Sample

To test the framing of children in newspapers near the U.S.-Mexico border, the researcher first selected articles to analyze. Using the Access World News search engine, the researcher looked for online newspaper articles about children who migrated from Latin America. The researcher selected articles published between June 1 and June 30, 2014, because June was a peak month for unaccompanied children crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. The results were narrowed to newspapers in Arizona and Texas, two states with "risk areas" for border crossings (Department of Homeland Security). Newspapers published more than 100 miles from the border were eliminated from the sample pool. In addition, stories published in Spanish were removed to create consistency for the analysis. All articles in the sample were news stories with local datelines. The headlines of the articles referenced immigration and children in some form.

After narrowing the sample criteria, the researcher selected 10 newspaper articles from five newspapers to analyze. Six of the articles were published in Arizona, and four were published in Texas. The Arizona newspapers were *The Arizona Daily Star* (Tucson) and *Nogales International*. The Texas newspapers were *The Brownsville Herald*, *El Paso Times*, and *The (McAllen) Monitor*.

Coding

To conduct the framing analysis, the researcher coded articles to specify framing of children. The coding categories for this study were created after reviewing research about the framing of immigrants and children in the press. In this study, the coding method was adapted from Kim et al., who analyzed the definition, cause, and solution frames of immigration in the media (294, 302). The Kim et al. derived their categories from Entman's definition of framing, three out of the four categories. According to Entman, framing requires people "to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/ or treatment recommendation" (52). First the following information was noted: name of article, the name of newspaper, the location of publication; the distance from Mexican border, and the date of publication (Refer to Appendix: Coding Sheet).

Based on the Kim et al.'s study, additional information was included on the coding sheet to analyze the framing of children in the articles. Coding categories for defining immigration included victim and criminal. Coding categories for causes of immigration included economic instability in Latin America, political instability in Latin America and illegal activity. Coding categories for solutions included changing the economic system in Latin America, changing the political system in Latin America, and increasing border control. Additionally, each of the three sections on the coding sheet included an "other" category for the coder to add more frames found within the articles.

The researcher examined previous academic studies about coding to avoid bias in the coding process. Upon reading each story, the researcher identified frames by comparing the words of the article with the frames on the coding sheet. The researcher recorded results on separate coding sheets. The coder marked the presence of frames in each category and had the ability to mark more than one category for each section. The coding sheet also allowed the researcher to make notes about why articles fit into the selected categories.

IV. Results

For the definition of child migrants in all newspapers, 80 percent (8 out of 10 articles) included victim frames, whereas 70 percent included criminal frames in relation to immigration of children. More specifically, only the victim frame was observed in three articles; only the criminal frame in two articles; and both victim and criminal frames in five articles, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 divides the results for framing of immigration by the distance of publications from the closest Mexican city. Four newspapers within 20 miles of a Mexican city presented definitions of immigration with the following frequencies: one article included the victim frame; another article included the criminal frame; and five articles included both the victim and criminal frames. One newspaper located more than 20 miles away from a city in Mexico presented three articles: two articles with only the victim frame and one article with only the criminal frame. All five publications were an average of 26.9 miles from the nearest city in Mexico. The closest publication, *Nogales International*, was located 3 miles from Nogales, Mexico. On the other hand, *The Arizona Daily Star*, located in Tucson, was the furthest city from the border—73 miles from the city of Nogales, Mexico.

Table 1. Newspapers and their contents

Newspaper name	State of publication	Distance from border	Article number	Framing	Causes of immigration	Solution
El Paso Times	Texas	less than 20 miles	1	victim, criminal	political, economic, illegal activity	border security
			2	victim, criminal	political, economic, illegal activity	border security, other
The Brownsville Herald	Texas	less than 20 miles	3	victim, criminal	illegal activity	other
The Monitor	Texas	less than 20 miles	4	victim, criminal	illegal activity	border security
Nogales International	Arizona	less than 20 miles	5	victim, criminal	illegal activity	border security
			6	victim	political, economic, illegal activity	political, economic, border security, other
			7	criminal	illegal activity	border security
The Arizona Daily Star	Arizona	more than 20 miles	8	victim	political, economic	other
			9	criminal	political, illegal activity	border security
			10	victim	political, economic	N/A

As Table 1 shows, Arizona and Texas newspaper articles differed in framing of immigration. In all, six of the articles in the study were published in Arizona, and four were published in Texas. For Arizona newspapers, three articles used the victim frame, two articles had the criminal frame and one article included both frames. In contrast, all of the Texas articles included both victim and criminal frames to define immigration of children.-

Five articles presented economic instability in Latin America; six articles presented political instability in Latin America; and eight articles presented illegal activity. Thus, illegal activity was the most common cause, and economic instability was the least common. In addition, the framing categories about circumstances in Latin America were correlated. In all instances except one, an economic instability frame was included within the same article as a political one.

According to distance from the border, all of the articles published by papers within 20 miles from Mexico included the illegal activity frame as a cause of immigration of children from Latin America. On the other hand, one article published by a paper located beyond 20 miles from the border included this frame. By state, all Texas articles included the frame of illegal activity, while four of the six Arizona articles included that frame. In the coder's notes on the causes of immigration in all articles, some common words and phrases within each category included "poverty" and "economic crisis" for economic instability in Latin America; "gangs," "drugs," and "violence" for political instability in Latin America; and "crossing the border illegally" for illegal activity.

Finally, for the solutions to immigration, changing border security was the most popular frame, appearing in seven articles. One newspaper article did not include solution frames, and only one article

offered the frames of changing the economic and political system in Latin America as solutions. In addition, the "other" category covered "changing information about border security," which included revising punishments for entering the country without documentation, adding law enforcement officials at the border, and stopping the spread of misinformation about the lack of consequences for unaccompanied immigrant children entering the United States.

V. Discussion

A framing analysis of newspaper articles published within 100 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border found these media framed child migrants as both victims and criminals. So the first hypothesis was partially supported. The results also revealed the categories of economic and political instability in Latin America were presented less frequently as causes for immigration than illegal activity. Thus, the second hypothesis was rejected.

Frames

This analysis revealed newspaper articles framed children as both victims and criminals in stories about immigration from Latin America. The framing of children as victims makes sense because children are commonly viewed as more vulnerable than adults. But the results of this study also show newspapers defined immigrants as criminals, a frame present in many stories about adult immigrants (Merolla, Ramakrishnan and Haynes 793-4, *A Report* 24). Thus, the portrayal of children as criminals reveals it is difficult for journalists to write outside this frame when covering immigrants who are children. In this framing analysis, the content of the articles could have also influenced the framing results. All articles were news pieces, so many of them informed readers about changes in border patrol operations, including surveillance of the border and detention facilities for unaccompanied children. In contrast, articles in features sections might have included more victim frames due to their narrative structures. Another explanation of the use of the criminal frame could be adherence to The Associated Press guidelines. The 2014 guidebook advises journalists how to use the term "illegal" when describing immigrants in their articles, and it is likely journalists in newspapers near the U.S.-Mexico border referred to this entry (Christian 125-26).

The results also indicate the frame of illegal activity was the most common cause for immigration in the articles. But the economic and political instability frames were in at least half of articles. The social climate about immigration in the border region likely influenced journalists' framing of child migrants, as Branton and Dunaway found in their "Slanted" study (264). Another possible explanation for the lack of economic and political instability frames is because the articles covered unaccompanied children. Although the children might have crossed the border alone, adults in Latin America probably pushed them to migrate. Thus, the causes for immigration in their countries of origin might not be as obvious for the U.S. journalists who frame the issue.

The solution category helps explain the causes of immigration. Although several articles framed the causes of immigration around economic and political instability in Latin America, only one of the articles in the sample offered changing political and economic circumstances as a solution for immigration of children. These results mirror the conclusions of researchers who found newspapers did not include related solutions for issues (Kim et al. 307-08). Additionally, the coder's notes about solutions for immigration might help to explain the results. The terms used to create the political frame referenced both gang and drug violence in Latin America. It is possible that journalists continued to associate children from the region with violence even after they migrated to the United States. In addition, the framing analysis revealed the presence of an additional frame — changing information about border security. This frame imposed on media sources in Latin America the responsibility of informing children in their countries about the realities of the U.S. immigration system.

Location

The results suggest the location of publication is associated with the framing of children in newspaper articles. The majority of articles published within 20 miles of a Mexican city framed children as both victims and criminals. But the majority of articles in the newspaper farther from the border — *The Arizona Daily Star*

— framed children as victims. These results reflect the studies of Branton and Dunaway and Kim et al., who found media outlets closer to the U.S.-Mexico border were likely to cover immigration negatively (Branton and Dunaway "Spatial" 295; Kim et al. 306).

Similarly, newspapers in Arizona and Texas differed in their framing of immigrant children. The two states are "risk areas" for border crossings, but many of the unaccompanied children in the 2014 surge crossed the border in South Texas (Department of Homeland Security). The proximity to the surge may explain why Texas newspapers included illegal activity as a frame. But it is important to note that only two of the Texas articles — the ones from *The Brownsville Herald* and *The Monitor* — were in the area with the greatest influx of immigrants. As Branton and Dunaway explain in their analysis, media members write negatively about immigration due to the political climate near the border and the economic motivation to sensationalize stories. In a similar way, newspapers within 20 miles of the border and in South Texas likely realized covering a polarized local topic might increase readership.

VI. Conclusion

This study aimed to study the framing of immigrant children coming to the United States from Latin America. The research focused on newspapers published within 100 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. Based on previous literature, articles presented immigrants from Latin America as victims or criminals. The researcher hypothesized that newspaper articles framed children as victims, and newspaper articles referred to economic and political instability in Latin America to construct the victim frame. The researcher conducted a framing analysis of 10 newspaper articles from Arizona and Texas to find out how they represented child migrants. The findings partly supported the first hypotheses because they indicated articles presented children as both victims and criminals. The second hypothesis was rejected because articles did frame illegal activity as a cause for immigration more often than the causes of economic or political instability in Latin America.

Implications

The results of this study have implications within the communications field. As some researchers point out, the framing of immigrants as criminals can have negative consequences, including exclusion of groups from some aspects of society (Soderlund 171-175). Thus, the results indicate some of the frames used to represent child migrants may evoke negative stereotypes about the group. These findings are important because many professional codes of ethics encourage journalists to report stories without bias. Thus, journalists should be aware of preexisting prejudices when they report on polemic topics, including immigration to the United States from Latin America. This implication especially affects journalists in border states, where the topic of immigration appears in news outlets more frequently than it does in other areas of the country.

In addition to media producers and consumers in border states, people in other parts of the country should care about the results of the study. According to the findings, most articles presented changing border security as a solution for immigration of children from Latin America. This frame might have nationwide repercussions because it can influence the national conversation about immigration policies. The results of immigration reform have the potential to reverberate throughout the country because immigrants contribute to multiple sectors of the economy. The study also may affect people who identify as Hispanic in the United States. As this population has grown, more non-Hispanics have interacted with people from that demographic group. Thus, as a result of the criminal frame, it is possible dominant social groups will push migrants and others with Latin American ancestry to the margins of society.

Limitations

There are notable limitations in this study. One limitation is only one researcher coded the articles, therefore it is possible that other coders might not have labeled the newspaper articles in similar categories. Future studies might include a more objective method for studying newspaper articles. Also, the study used a small sample size. The U.S.-Mexico border is nearly 2,000 miles long, and the 2014 surge happened for more than a month. So, it is possible that the results do not represent the frames of all newspaper articles published

in the southwestern United States during that surge. An analysis of more articles could have yielded results that more accurately reflected the framing of child migrants from Latin America in the press.

There is room to expand upon this study. In general, researchers can modify the study to encompass other immigrant groups. Moreover, it is possible to extend the method to analyze the framing of other polemic issues in various geographic locations. Also, during the 2014 surge, several newspaper opinion articles were published near the U.S.-Mexico border. In the future, researchers may be interested analyzing how editorials and letters to the editor represented children during that time period. In addition, a future study could compare the framing of both children and adults in newspaper articles about immigration from Latin America. An expanded study could also ask readers' perceptions about the two groups after reading newspaper articles to determine effects of article reading on framing.

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Appendix: Coding Sheet

Article information

Name of article:

Name of newspaper:

Location of publication:

Distance from Mexican border:

Date of publication:

Framing information

Definitions

Victim:

Criminal:

Other:

Causes

Economic instability in Latin America:

Political instability in Latin America:

Illegal activity:

Other:

Solutions

Changing the economic system in Latin America:

Changing the political system in Latin America:

Changing border security:

Other:

Examining the Beauty Industry's Use of Social Influencers

Kristen Forbes

Strategic Communications
Elon University

Abstract

With the rise of social media, the use of social influencers has become a popular tactic in brand marketing. Research to date regarding the use of social influencers for branding has lacked specific insight regarding the beauty industry. This study identified characteristics of selected beauty social influencers to see how they are utilized in advertorials for brands on YouTube. The study used a content analysis of Maybelline's sponsored videos that three influencers produced and featured on their YouTube channels. Attribution theory and social learning theory were used for analysis of influencers' impact on viewers.

I. Introduction

In 2014, beauty was the fourth-leading industry with the largest reach of influencers in the United States (Statista, n.d.). These influencers, dubbed online as "Beauty Gurus" online, use their skills in makeup to partner with cosmetic brands, earning big bucks while building brand awareness around products. Influencers have gained popularity due to the rise of social media and their ability to connect with their consumer peers. These self-made social media celebrities are vital to brand storytelling, and their thoughts and opinions may actually be more persuasive than messaging straight from the cosmetic brands themselves. With this realization, marketers and communications professionals are seeking ways to leverage these new influencers in changing brand dialogue in the digital space.

Research has been conducted on social influencers for brands, but there is a lack of research focused specifically on influencers in the beauty industry. To gain more insight into this area, this study will dive into the world of beauty social influencers, specifically looking at the brand Maybelline. Maybelline is a top-selling cosmetic company across the globe and the leader on the Nielsen "Top 10s" Health and Beauty list with more than \$86 million in sales at the end of January 2016 (Nielsen, n.d.). Maybelline's communication strategy includes the use of social influencers to promote trends and products in the social space by the use of advertorials on YouTube. This provides a perfect case study for identifying the characteristics of influencers used by a successful cosmetic brand. This paper will study what the successful characteristics of social influencers are and how they are utilized as an advantage to the branding of Maybelline.

Keywords: social influencers, branding, Maybelline, social media, brand marketing Email: kforbes4@elon.edu

This undergraduate project was conducted as a partial requirement of a research course in communications.

II. Literature Review

This literature review will investigate who social influencers are, why they are important to brand marketing, and what kind of communication theory is behind their influence.

Who is a Social Influencer?

Social influencers represent a type of third-party endorser who shapes audience attitudes (Freberg, Freberg, Graham, & McGaughey, 2010). Influencers gain popularity through their participation on social networking sites and achieve fame through online media, such as blogs and online videos on sites like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. Influencers amass followers through the content that they cultivate themselves, allowing audiences to step into their personal narratives. They are often seen as more "organic," with many of them leading normal lives not as established celebrities or actors, making them more relatable to the everyday consumers watching their content. One way influencers monetize their content is through advertorials; highly personalized, opinion-laden promotions of products/services that influencers personally experience for a fee ("Micro-microcelebrity", 2015). Their contribution to word-of-mouth through posts, pictures, and messages on their social networking profiles is an advantage for marketers looking to get in on the digital dialogue surrounding their brand.

Freberg et al. (2011) identified specific influencer characteristics that appealed most to participants. The participants pinpointed verbal, smart, ambitious, productive, and poised as the most positive attributes for both the influencers and the brand they were advocating. Ideally influencers give off a sense of trust as a third-party sponsor for a product because of their consumer peer status. Their opinion on products resonates with fellow consumers, and in social posts they often take pleasure in giving advice and recommendations. Although influencers use the power of their blogs and social networking sites to leverage conversation for brands, many see it as a way to express themselves as individuals. "Bloggers consider blogging a personal medium for self-expression, community connection and sharing opinions" (Smith, 2010, p.176). Influencers who maintain this sense of identity to their communities are looked at as relatable and credible, allowing them to become important messengers for consumers looking for recommendations on products.

Selecting influencers for particular brands is determined by a number of factors, most importantly, their popularity and industries they belong to. The number of followers, friends, or fans on an influencer's profile can determine how influential they will be, as Chatterjee (2011) described, "The visible display of members of one's social network at SNSs (social networking sites) plays a signaling role in enhancing a recipient's' decision to comply with an influencer's new product recommendation" (p.88). Posting frequency, engagement rates with readers/viewers, and the number of referral links also play into how successful an influencer will be for a brand. Researchers have spent a significant amount of time creating algorithms to help companies choose who is the best for them based on how relatable they are to both the influencer's and brand's audience to ensure cost effectiveness. Finding the right influencers can help brands improve their frequent reach to target audiences, enabling greater overall campaign effectiveness.

Social Influencers for Brand Marketing

Integrating social aspects into campaigns is now vital to the survival of the brand strategy. Social influencers are a tactic of a larger brand strategy that includes social media campaigns. Brand strategy is the foundation of the communication that builds authentic relationships (Booth & Matic, 2011). Understanding where your chosen social influencer fits into your campaign is pivotal for success. Social influencers have the ability to reinforce brand strategy online by providing information that mitigates perceived risk and induce recipients to engage with the brand sponsor (Chatterjee, 2011).

With the rise of social media and the shift to a fast-paced tech world, communications professionals need to keep up with consumer conversations online. In order for brands to have a voice in this digital dialogue, many have turned to social media sites and, in turn, social influencers. Gillin (2008) found among the communications professionals surveyed, 57% said that social media tools are becoming more valuable to their activities, with blogs, online video, and social networks as the top three tools that their organization has used in a recent campaign. Within the integration of social networks, the presence of social media influencers gives brand marketers an upper hand in joining the conversation.

Consumers have always been the heart of the brand, and their opinions and attitudes toward the brand are what builds it up or leads to its demise. Social media allows for brands to directly engage in conversations that build relationships with consumers and encourage brand loyalty (Booth & Matic, 2011). Although brands do not have complete control over the conversation, they can influence it with the use of social influencers online as consumer brand advocates. Influencers who participate in advertorials allow brands to have a direct voice in the conversation, reaching consumers through their more trusted consumer peers.

Social Influencer Theory

Social learning theory helps one understand why influencers are influential in the first place. Reasoning that people can acquire new patterns of behavior by watching others, Bandura (1971) wrote, "On the basis of informative feedback, they develop thoughts or hypotheses about the types of behavior most likely to succeed. These hypotheses then serve as guides for future actions" (p.3). Bandura suggests that people's behaviors are learned either deliberately or inadvertently through example. Influencers lead by example, recommending or reinforcing products that they like through advertorials. Therefore, viewers watching these examples may be more likely to adopt those behaviors exhibited by the influencer. Brand marketers use this strategy in hopes that consumers will follow influencers' behavior as "monkeys see monkeys do."

Social influencers are masters of eWOM or electronic word-of-mouth. Word-of-mouth has proven to be more effective than messages from brand marketers because consumers believe it to be more credible and trustworthy (Lee & Yuon, 2009). This can also be looked at through the lens of attribution theory, which deals with how a person attributes an observation to the external situation or the person's internal disposition (Fiske, & Taylor, 1991). "The more the consumer attributes the communicator's review about a product to that product's actual performance, the more the consumers will perceive that the communicator is credible, the more the consumer will have confidence in the accuracy of the review, the stronger the consumer's belief that the product has the attributes mentioned in the review" (Lee & Yuon, 2009, p.476). Influencers take on a strong role in forming other consumers' opinions on products and services. This is important for brand marketers looking to keep conversations online positive to persuade other consumers to try their products.

Framework For Analysis

In order to understand the attributes of successful established beauty social influencers, this study identified five characteristics based on literature review and applied them to a content analysis of videos posted by a selection of social influencers.

III. Method

Based on literature review, five characteristics were chosen to analyze YouTube beauty advertorials: relatability, knowledge, helpfulness, confidence, and articulation.

The characteristics are defined by this study as such:

- **Relatability**: The influencer shares a connection with their consumer audience. They give personal accounts and experiences that cause a sympathetic relationship with their peers.
- **Knowledge**: The influencer has insight about the industry they are representing and is able to offer clear and certain facts about products to the consumer audience.
- **Helpfulness**: The influencer gives advice and usable opinions that can persuade consumer decisions on a product.
- Confidence: The influencer trusts in their own words and has assurance of themselves and their abilities
- **Articulation**: The influencer clearly communicates and presents information fluidly to help audiences understand the product, both verbally and visually.

The cosmetic company Maybelline was chosen as a case study to apply these characteristics as defined above. Three social influencers were chosen based on highest posting frequency of sponsored content or advertorials on Maybelline's playlist "Maybelline Beauty Tutorials" on its official YouTube page for 2015. In order to capture the different makeup trends throughout the year, the sample was further broken down by season. Each season had at least two videos featuring separate influencers. Influencers have total of four videos each for analysis, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Posting frequency of bloggers

Season	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Influencer				
Shaaanxo	х	х	х	х
MakeupByAli	х	х	х	х
Jenny Clair Fox	xx	х		х

IV. Findings and Discussion

The three influencers had a total number of subscribers ranging from just below 0.8 million to 2 million. During each of the four seasons, the author identified a makeup trend the influencers highlighted in each video during a particular season that corresponded with a Maybelline product used in every advertorial by them, as shown in Table 2. These trends are likely given to the influencers by Maybelline as part of the brand sponsoring the influencers' content.

Table 2. Seasonal Trend and Corresponding Maybelline Product

Season	Trend	Maybelline product
Spring	Chaotic Lashes	Volum' Express Colossal Chaotic Lash Mascara
Summer	Blushed Nudes	The Blushed Nudes Eyeshadow Palette
Fall	Blurred Lip	Lip Studio Color Blur Lip Pencil
Winter	White Hot Winter	The Falsies Push Up Drama Lash Mascara

A large number of people viewed the advertorials these bloggers posted, as shown in Table 3. It's also important to note that by law, each of these influencers does state in the description boxes below their videos that Maybelline has sponsored these particular videos along with the statement of "all opinions are my own" beside it.

Table 3. Influencers' Subscribers v. Average Views per Video

Influencer	Subscribers	Average views per video
Shaaanxo	2,412,832	328,693
MakeupByAli	791,824	148,408
Jenny Clair Fox	943,470	77,166

Being Relatable Creates Connections

Being relatable comes with the territory for these influencers. It's what makes them so appealing to consumers and what builds trust in the words that they say. Each influencer had something about both their body and verbal language that this study will deem the friend factor. Their language is relaxed; informal and

feels as though you are listening to a friend teach you how to do your makeup. This allows the audience to feel a connection with these influencers right away, whereas if the brand marketers were to host these videos, the type of language would be more direct, focused on selling and, therefore, harsher and less personal. These influencers also show personality through the videos, whether it's poking fun at themselves or cracking a joke, friend-like character traits poke through the holes of the advertorial, making it feel more fun and relaxed.

One influencer does this particularly well, when she opens up the conversation and makes it a two-way dialogue between her and her viewers. Jenny Clair Fox demonstrated this during a video when she asks the audience a question as she's applying her makeup. She talks about the trend of contouring, or applying shadows and highlights to manipulate the structure of the face. She tells her viewers that she dislikes the trend, but then asks what they think and encourages them to comment their opinions below the video. This shows the influencer's effort to connect in a casual way, where she is simultaneously opening up a brand conversation about the product she is using while building a relationship with the audience.

The relatable characteristic is important for brands to consider when choosing influencers. What Fox did was show an interest in her viewer's point of view. When influencers commit to knowing their audience, they become a part of their audience, forming relationships and becoming that peer whom viewers can look to give them a voice in the brand conversation. Booth and Matic (2011) stressed, "Ownership of the brand and its reputation ha[s] always belonged to the consumer," (p.185). Using this type of brand advocate who also acts as a consumer advocate for her viewers gives Maybelline an upper hand in not only getting across its messaging, but also provides insight into the consumer conversations and valuable feedback for the brand. By using this influencer, Maybelline has now been able to connect to their consumers by simply giving them a voice through the influencer acting as a consumer advocate.

Knowledge Benefits

All of the influencers in this case study showed a high degree of knowledge in their videos. As defined in the methods section, for influencers to be considered knowledgeable, they must be able to offer clear and certain facts about products to the consumer audience. MakeupByAli demonstrated this while describing the product design details of The Falsies Push Up Drama Lash Mascara. She stated, "This applicator has a lot of mini cups on it that help push up your lashes and you get lots of impact with it." She was able to give specifics on the design of the applicator to show the audience that she has an understanding of how the product works the way it does and what consumers can expect to see from it.

All the influencers also seem to have extensive experience with the application of the products. Fox consistently gave the names of brushes and clear instructions on application methods. These clear instructions show a level of expertise that only comes with being knowledgeable about products and their specific uses. This allows the influencers to give advice about the uses of certain products. For instance, Fox talks about the Maybelline Lip Studio Color Blur Lip Pencils: "They're great if you want just a little bit of wash over your lips or what I'm doing today, which is layering them over your lip color." This helps consumers further understand what Maybelline products can be used for and in what different ways.

Being insightful about the beauty industry as a whole was another qualification of this characteristic that the selected influencers demonstrated well. For example, Shaaanxo infuses the Maybelline spring makeup trend of "Chaotic Lashes" with Korean makeup trends she is seeing in fashion and other tutorial videos by fellow influencers. This shows that this influencer pays attention to global makeup trends, not just those issued by her sponsor. This builds credibility for influencers when audience members see that their content is not just being fed to them by a sponsor, but crafted out of research and knowledge of what's currently happening in the beauty world outside of the brand an influencer is promoting. When Maybelline uses influencers who can clearly demonstrate knowledge about the industry, it's incredibly helpful to the viewers who now get a well-rounded look at the products in a larger context than just the Maybelline brand, or just their own makeup uses. It also reflects Maybelline's own desire to develop and incorporate global aspects of makeup, rather than just catering makeup to one certain market.

Helpfulness

Each video was a tutorial, which means that there was an added "how to" element within the advertorial, which allows influencers to demonstrate helpfulness within their videos with the how-to

instructions. Tutorials work well with cosmetic brands because they give instructions on how to apply the makeup and which application methods work best for what products. They also give consumers ideas on how to incorporate Maybelline products into their regular makeup routines. In the videos, all influencers disperse the Maybelline products amongst products from other brands. This helps viewers understand which other brands' products complement the Maybelline products. The influencers also include swatches, or small color samples of products in their videos seen, as shown in *Figure* 1. This allows watchers to see the color of a product out of the package, giving them a better sense of what the product will look like in real life.



Figure 1. Influencer demonstrating the swatch.

As found in the literature review, influencers love to give advice. Viewers often feel that is helpful to hear these words of wisdom from a fellow consumer, than a brand marketer. Both the consumer and the brand benefit when the influencer gives advice regarding their particular products. MakeupByAli was the most thorough in her advice and the most consistent in giving the viewer tips and tricks of how to apply the makeup more effectively to get the best use out of the product. For example, when talking about how to apply shadows from The Blush Nudes Eye Shadow Palette, she suggests a method that improves the look of the shadows. "I'm using a brush that's made for a cream product, because when you use it with a powder it's going to give you even more color impact and color payoff," she said. When consumers watch this video, it will help them understand how to apply the product better. Consumers may also learn an insightful tip that they can further use in their own makeup routines, which is another benefit to them.

Confidence is Persuasive

Influencers exhibited confidence through the assertion of specific claims they make on products throughout the videos. All influencers used words like "love" and phrases like "my favorite" to describe products that have worked for them. For example, in one instance the influencer said, "This has to be one of my favorite lipsticks of all time." These types of claims show assurance in influencer opinions and reinforce to the audience that the influencers are not wavering between certain products. They know and have confidence in the fact that this product is something that they trust and have no problem sharing with thousands of viewers that it is something they love.

Body language was another signifier of confidence. The influencers always made eye contact with the camera, sat up straight, and spoke with authority. There was also a lot posing, as seen in *Figure* 2, that goes on in the beginning and end of the advertorials to show off the final look. This type of body language gives the illusion that the influencers know what they are doing and feel confident in themselves and their abilities.



Figure 2. Influencer demonstrating posing that signifies confident body language.

Articulation Wraps Everything Together

This characteristic demonstrates the relationship between technical skills of video presentation and editing with verbal skills. Not only do influencers need to be well spoken and understandable, but also the way they visually present the verbal information can make an impact on how well it will be received by consumers. All the influencers have a significant following, which leads the viewer to believe that they are successful. However, not all have the same average number of views as seen above in Table 3. This can be attributed to how well influencers articulate the information in their videos. If influencers are hard to follow, or bounce around in their thoughts and go off on tangents, it takes away from the brand messaging in the advertorials. For the purpose of an advertorial, influencers need to be able to clearly present information. This encompasses all of the aforementioned characteristics as well as presentation ability.

The influencer who shows the best articulation was MakeupByAli. She consistently, through all of the four videos analyzed, is the most clear and fluid when presenting information. The influencer's process is very methodical. One can tell time and effort have been put into the way she structures the brand messaging while weaving in instructions and her opinions about the product. Whereas other influencers tend to bounce around in their thoughts, this influencer's clear step-by-step instruction through visual and verbal means was easy to follow and understand. She often shows the product with the application while voicing over instructions, as demonstrated in *Figure* 3. This approach gives the audience a clear understanding of the product. Aesthetic also comes into play with this particular trait, and her visual skills and use of space and camera contributed to a clean feeling when watching her videos. Her edits are crisp and flow nicely along with the narration, which gives the audience a pleasant viewing experience.

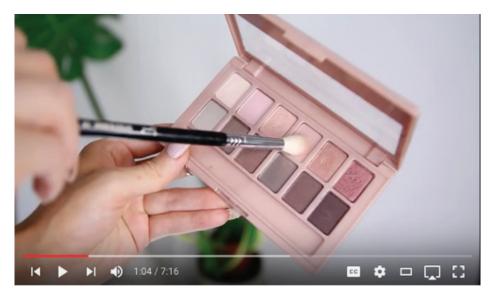


Figure 3. Influencer demonstrating articulation by showing product and application method in a single frame.

For Maybelline, utilizing video as a presentation method for its brand messaging helps consumers visualize themselves with the product. Advertorials on YouTube allow them to present brand messaging through a visual means while also getting the audience engaged in conversation on a social platform. The fluidity of the advertorials is like a one-stop shop for consumers where they can see products, learn how to use them, and utilize the referral links to get a further explore the product. When the influencers are articulate in their presentation of the information, Maybelline benefits by building consumer awareness and knowledge surrounding its products.

V. Discussion

The influencers chosen by Maybelline can be understood in the context of both social learning theory and attribution theory. Using YouTube and its video platform, consumers watch, listen, and read about the products all at once, through the voice of an influential, persuasive consumer. The YouTube platform makes it possible for these two theories to function in tandem, both forming and molding the behaviors and decision making of the consumer. Advertorials can arguably be the most influential on this platform for this reason.

In Bandura's social learning theory, he describes how learning by experience is reinforced by outcomes and consequences: "Knowing that a given model's behavior is effective in producing valued rewards or averting negative consequences can enhance observational learning by increasing observer's attentiveness to the model's actions" (p.9). This increase in attentiveness to a model's actions, which in this case is a Maybelline influencer, may lead to the adoption of the influencer's purchasing behaviors. In a sense, the how-to portions of the tutorials alleviate some of the expected problems that Bandura suggests, such as frustration or dissatisfaction when applying products wrong or in an ineffective way. The reward for consumers is a more positive outcome with the product; and in turn, more satisfaction in their purchasing decision. When Maybelline's influencers act out the how-to portion well, consumers learn beneficial behaviors and Maybelline gets more brand exposure.

eWOM or electronic word-of-mouth is made easy by the YouTube platform. As mentioned earlier, influencers love to give advice and refer products to their audiences. However, consumers are aware of their marketing techniques, so what they say and how they say it can make a big difference in the consumer's opinion of their review. In attribution theory, if an influencer positively reviews a product, the consumer will attribute more positive outcomes of the product; therefore, the language being used to sell the product in a positive light during the advertorials contributes to the consumer's perceived positive outcomes.

Messages of confidence and positivity could be built by influencers when they used words like "love," "like," "favorite," or phrases like "highly recommend," according to attribution theory. These casual statements regarding products, according to the theory, are persuasive in forming consumer opinions about a product because it is a review by an influential voice. When the influencers are confident and positive in their reviews and opinions, consumers will in turn be confident in their own purchasing decision and use of the product based on that review. Maybelline's use of these influencers who exhibit confidence in their statements creates a positive conversation surrounding the brand that will then reflect in other consumer's positive experiences with the product.

Advertorials on YouTube incorporating influencers explains why so many communications professionals are using bloggers, vloggers, and online videos as part of their campaign tactics. The reach of influencers can go beyond just the number of shares and likes, but can actually make a difference in the behaviors and opinions of consumers. There is also a peer element in both of these theories that allows for more trust and credibility and a better consumer-brand relationship to be built in an organic way, rather than through straight brand messages. This makes advertorials a highly engaging and highly effective method to reach consumer audiences.

VI. Conclusions

Maybelline has done an excellent job in selecting influencers who have shown the characteristics defined by this study. Some influencers exhibited the five characteristics better than others, but each has individual strengths that allow them to succeed in providing Maybelline a voice in the beauty conversation. Each characteristic —relatable, knowledgeable, helpful, confident, and articulate—relates back to the role of the influencers using their voice to inject Maybelline into the online dialogue. Being relatable creates openness between brand and consumer, while being knowledgeable reflects insight and awareness of the beauty world in a larger context. Being helpful builds a relationship between the consumer and brand that alleviates the stress of applying products, while self-confidence arises positivity around purchase behavior and satisfaction of the product. Articulation then pulls in all these characteristics with the ability to clearly present the material in a video format that visually engages viewers with Maybelline products.

Acknowledgment

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An Analysis of Mental Health in Women's Magazines

Amanda Garrity

Strategic Communications
Elon University

Abstract

Women's magazines are instrumental in generating a conversation about conditions that affect their readers, including mental health, which often goes untreated or undiagnosed by a doctor. Through content analysis and the objectification theory, this study analyzed how mental health conditions including depression, anxiety, and stress are mentioned in three women's magazines: Seventeen, Cosmopolitan, and The Oprah Magazine. Findings suggest there is an imbalanced representation of mental health conditions, a misuse of mental health terminology, and a stigma surrounding this issue.

I. Introduction

Millions of women read magazines every month, from publications focused on food and home décor to health and fitness. Despite the declining readership of print publications, women's magazines are still well-loved, well-read, and influential in the female space. Women's magazines are more resilient than any other print media in terms of subscription count. Research by the National Magazine Company found that 36% of women trust magazines to inform them about timely and important issues and provide perspective on topics seemingly unknown to them (Saner, 2010).

Mental health has made headlines in recent years due to the lack of public understanding, upsurge of mass violence, and increased political involvement. Mental illness is common and affects 23.8 percent of all women (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2010). Women predominate in most mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress. Unfortunately, most men and women with mental illnesses are not likely to be treated by a doctor or have their illness diagnosed. Nearly 60% of people with severe mental illness received no specialty care in the last 12 months (World Health Organization, 2016).

Three women's magazines will be assessed to determine how the topic of mental health is being presented in magazines with varying ages of readership: Seventeen, Cosmopolitan, and The Oprah Magazine.

Keywords: mental health, women, magazines, objectification, stigma

Email: amandagarrity2@gmail.com

This undergraduate project was conducted as a partial requirement of a research course in communications.

II. Literature Review

The literature below examined the definition of mental health, the correlation between mental health and women, the application of the objectification theory in relation to women's mental health, and the influence of magazines on women.

Defining Mental Health in the United States

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a dimension of one's overall condition in conjunction with physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Mental health is the state of well-being, in which every individual realizes his or her potential, copes with everyday stresses, has the ability to work productively, and is able to make a positive contribution to his or her community (Rath, 2009). The subject of mental health is both broad and complex. It does not affect everyone in the same way, nor is everyone susceptible to mental illness.

Under the umbrella of mental health, there are several illnesses including depression and anxiety. Yet within each illness, there are intricacies, controversies, and exceptions (World Health Organization, 2016). Depression, also known as depressive disorder or clinical depression, is a serious mood disorder that affects the actions, feelings, and daily activities of an individual. There are a variety of signs and symptoms including persistent sadness, feelings of guilt, fatigue, and suicidal thoughts (National Institute of Mental Health, 2016). Anxiety is an emotion distinguished by feelings of tension, worry, and physical changes, such as increased blood pressure and sweating (American Psychological Association, 2016). Stress is a reactor to life events and interferes with a person's ability to live normally. It is the most common mental health issue, but is rarely categorized as a disorder (National Institute of Mental Health, 2016).

In recent years, mental health has been a topic of conversation at both the dinner table and in Congressional hearings. President Barack Obama has supported public policies advocating for better access to treatment programs and a universal understanding of the severity of these illnesses. While the mental health discussion is often a result of the horrific acts of the mentally ill, especially mass shootings, it is now more talked-about and accepted than ever before. In a 2014 proclamation during Mental Health Awareness Month, President Obama said, "We too often think about mental health differently from other forms of health. Yet like any disease, mental illnesses can be treated—and without help, they can grow worse" ("Presidential Proclamation," 2014). Mental health is a major health issue in the United States, but due to public ignorance and the negligence of the healthcare professionals and legislators, there has been standstill in the prevention and treatment of such conditions (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2015).

The Relationship Between Mental Health and Women

Women are nearly twice as likely as men to be depressed or suffer from anxiety disorders. The reason for this disparity in mental illness, while unclear, is linked to biology, unique personality characteristics, and a lack of control in society (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). While more men are successful in committing suicide, more women attempt to commit suicide. In 2009, 3.9% of women in the United States had serious thoughts of suicide (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2010). Women are suffering from improper treatment because many doctors assume they are being hormonal and prescribe them medication without accurately identifying the mental health issue (World Health Organization, 2016).

Women's Mental Health and Objectification

The objectification theory, coined by Harper and Tiggemann (2007), states that the objectification of women and girls in Western culture contributes to women's internalization of objectification. Typically, objectification of women comes from a sexual approach, with the perpetrator—whether a human being or visual media—treating the woman's body, mind, and soul like an object. The consequences of objectification are influential on women's mental health.

Due to objectification, women are apt to undergo constant body monitoring, creating overwhelming anxiety and shame, a lack of self-positivity, and a misunderstanding of internal bodily conditions. Additionally, women victimized by objectification, through rape, harassment, or other extreme measures, are likely to enter a depressive or stressed state (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Objectification of women, consequently, is a

contributing factor to the poorer mental health of women.

Self-objectification decreases with age but is present all throughout a woman's life, if exposed to objectification on a regular basis. This objectification increases body shame and fosters a greater appearance anxiety, which is likely to produce depression (Henning & Syzmanski, 2006). The 2007 study by Harper and Tiggemann concluded that even subtle cues provoke self-objectification, particularly in young women. For example, women do not have to be outwardly asked about their looks to form opinions or think critically about their own appearance. The objectification of women is ever-present, especially in Western culture. Women are their own worst critics: When advertisements, magazine covers, and other forms of visual media are focusing on sex and physical appearances, their self-objectification intensifies (Harper & Tiggemann, 2007).

Influence of Magazines on Women and Society

Magazines are extremely influential in the lives of women. They produce collective visuals for women to understand their personal experiences in relation to the stories about other women, along with lifestyle and health advice (Fullager, Gattuso, & Young, 2005).

In short, magazines matter. They have the potential to inspire readers and make a positive impact on their lives, if executed wisely. Magazines, while valued by their readers, are not viewed as highly as traditional newspapers. Their credibility is called into question due to the writing style, creative liberty, and mix of opinion (Lorenz, 2015). Yet magazines focus on the same topics, simply following a different format. "There are so many things that we do in *ELLE* or even in *Marie Claire* or *Vogue* that a year later, you'll see it in *Time* magazine, or you'll see it in *The New York Times*. And you think: 'The only reason you think this is news now is because you just decided to look at it,' said Robbie Meyers, editor-in-chief of *ELLE* (as cited in Steigrad, 2015). Meyers supports the notion that magazines are writing about the same important issues as newspapers. Their content is motivated by their readers rather than the competitive news cycle, which requires different writing techniques.

Magazines go hand in hand with national policy, especially in the case of mental illness, because they circulate discussion about the cause, management, and prevention of the illnesses when the illness is discussed for policy making. Magazines write about topical concerns that are relevant to the news media but more importantly, relevant to their readers. Seventeen, Cosmopolitan, and The Oprah Magazine, while varying in readership and content, all have similar missions: to guide, encourage, and inspire women. Through the discussion of important issues, they are upholding their mission and making a difference.

Using the objectification theory as a basis, this research examined the ways that mental health is discussed in three popular women's magazines: *Seventeen, Cosmopolitan,* and *The Oprah Magazine*. Although researchers have examined how women's magazines mention physical health and body image, there is a lack of information regarding mental health. This content analysis tried to find how differently each magazine presented the conversation of mental health in visual media and fit the needs of its target readers.

Drawing on previous research, this paper sought to answer these questions:

RQ1: To what extent do women's magazines, such as Seventeen, Cosmopolitan, and The Oprah Magazine, inform their readers about mental health issues?

RQ2: How do the messages surrounding mental health vary depending on the primary readership age of the publication?

III. Methods

Sampling Procedure

This research will rely on content analysis to examine the messaging strategies most frequently used in three women's magazines as the articles discuss mental health. Content analysis is defined as an "observational research method that is used to systematically evaluate the symbolic content of all forms of recorded communication" (Burnett & Kolbe, 1991). Articles from magazines were collected from November 2015 to April 2016 including six from *Cosmopolitan*, six from *The Oprah Magazine* and five from *Seventeen*,

due to its January/ February combination issue. During this time period, mental health was on the public's radar with numerous addresses from the various political leaders, including President Obama. For example, in January 2016 the Obama administration announced multiple executive actions to reduce gun violence. One of the actions included a \$500 million investment to increase access to mental health care (Office of the Press Secretary, 2016).

Seventeen, Cosmopolitan, and The Oprah Magazine were chosen based on their varying readership ages and high circulation rates. All magazines appeal to women and have health/wellness sections.

Seventeen is the most popular magazine for teenage women. The magazine is an engaging, informative, and entertaining "how-to" guide for adolescent girls as they face pressures and troubles throughout their teenage years. More than 3 million girls are subscribed to the monthly publication with their median age of 16.5 (Seventeen Media Kit, 2016). Cosmopolitan, a magazine for "fun, fearless women," reaches more than 14.5 million women each month with their median age of 34.7. The largest young women's media brand works to empower women to own who they are and have a successful future (Cosmopolitan Media Kit, 2016). The Oprah Magazine strives to connect with real women about everyday issues, with a special focus on personal growth. The magazine reaches nearly 11 million readers each month and their median age is 50.5 (The Oprah Magazine Media Kit, 2016).

Coding Structure

The author analyzed all feature articles, health and lifestyle advice columns, letters from the editor, and personal narratives for specific keywords. Coding of these articles was based on the work by Fullager, Gattuso, and Young (2005). The categories in the initial content analysis were: *depression, anxiety* and *stress*. Depression and anxiety are the two most common mental health issues among women, and stress is the most common condition linked to women and their well-being (World Health Organization, 2016). Key words for this category included depressed, depression, anxious, anxiety, stressed, and stress. From there, the items were sorted into secondary categories, which were: *reasoning, management, consequences, co-existing conditions*, and *personal experiences/ narratives*.

Cancian and Gordon (1988) also influenced the structure of the coding sheet used in this study. In their research, Cancian and Gordon analyzed the patterns of emotion norms in a random sample of articles in popular magazines through a content analysis and qualitative study. By using a similar structure, the trends of mental health in magazines emerged. Each article was categorized as a particular mental health disorder and then, the subject matter of the article was analyzed to better understand how the mental health topic is being communicated to the reader.

The same coding sheet was used for all three publications. (Refer to the coding sheet in Appendix for more details.)

The results showed how three popular women's magazines conveyed the subject of mental health to the reader. Content analysis showed how distinctly each magazine communicated mental health disorder to their audience and whether there were any trends.

IV. Findings

The three publications in this study showed notable differences in their approaches to mental health. The most common mental health subject mentioned by *Seventeen, Cosmopolitan,* and *The Oprah Magazine* was stress (44%), followed by anxiety (33%) and depression (23%), as shown in Table 1. The most common approach to the subject was through the proposed management of the mental health issue. The magazines differed in the message portrayed and the number of times mental health was mentioned in each issue.

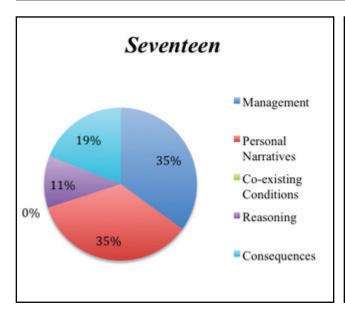
Table 1. Mental health themes found in content for three women's magazines

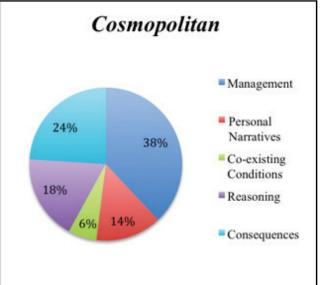
	Seventeen	Cosmopolitan	The Oprah Magazine	Total mentions
Depression	4 (15%)	9 (18%)	24 (41%)	37 (27%)
Reasoning for	0	3	2	5
Management of	2	3	6	11
Consequences of	0	1	4	5
Co-existing condition	0	2	4	6
Personal narrative	2	0	8	10
Anxiety	11 (42%)	14 (28%)	21 (36%)	46 (34%)
Reasoning for	1	1	3	5
Management of	4	6	7	17
Consequences of	2	4	1	7
Co-existing condition	0	1	5	6
Personal narrative	4	2	5	11
Stress	11 (42%)	27 (54%)	14 (24%)	52 (39%)
Reasoning for	2	5	3	10
Management of	3	10	4	17
Consequences of	3	7	1	11
Co-existing condition	0	0	2	2
Personal narrative	3	5	4	12
Total mentions	26 (19%)	50 (37%)	59 (44%)	135 (100%)

In total, there were 135 mentions of mental health in the 17 issues examined. The content covered more than one illness category and theme. *The Oprah Magazine* (42%) printed more articles on mental health than both *Cosmopolitan* (37%) and *Seventeen* (19%). *The Oprah Magazine* and *Cosmopolitan* were fairly comparable and nearly doubled the mental health mentions of *Seventeen*.

Stress (39%) was the most mentioned mental health issue, followed by anxiety (34%) and depression (27%). Both *Seventeen* and *Cosmopolitan* followed this pattern, but *The Oprah Magazine* was an exception with anxiety mentioned most (39%), followed by depression (34%) and stress (27%).

In all three publications, the management of mental health was the most common article topic: Seventeen (35%), Cosmopolitan (38%), and The Oprah Magazine (29%). After that, the magazines differed in their approach to the subject.





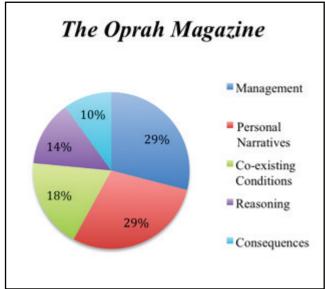


Figure 1. Method of presentation of mental health in three women's magazines

Seventeen had the highest number for personal narratives about mental health (31%), equal to management, followed by the consequences of mental health (19%) and reasoning for the disease (12%). There were no articles relating a particular mental health issue to a co-existing condition. In Cosmopolitan, the articles were focused, in descending order, on the consequences of mental health (24%), reasoning for (18%), personal narratives (14%) and co-existing conditions (6%). Similar to Seventeen, The Oprah Magazine had a similar distribution for personal narratives and management of the mental health condition (29% each). The other articles featured subjects in the following order: co-existing conditions (18 %), reasoning for the mental health issue (14%), and consequences of (10%).

Seventeen

Article topics in *Seventeen* ranged from survival guides for family holiday parties, adolescent acne, and the SATs, as well as the serious profile story of a transgender teenager. While mental health was absent from many articles, the emphasis on confidence and fearlessness was clear. Stress and anxiety went hand-in-hand, but depression was only mentioned two times in total, in the December 2015 and April 2016 issues. Coincidentally, both articles that highlighted depression were personal narratives by actors emphasizing how

creativity and pursuing their art helped them combat depression including "How I Became the Funny Girl" (Dec. 2015, pp. 24).

Seventeen focused on how mental health issues can be managed. Various management tactics included humor, music, meditation, and breathing techniques. There was no medical evidence or statistics to support their claims. In "Your Cheat Sheet to . . . The New SAT," Seventeen's solution to reducing anxiety during test taking was to use tools and calculators, a suggestion made by the founder of PrepMatters, a test-prep service in Washington, D.C. (Jan. 2016, pp. 98-99). This is a stark contrast to the clinical psychologists quoted in *The Oprah Magazine*. A commonality found in *Seventeen* is the need to survive. Several articles have "survival guide" in the title or imply that the tips and tricks mentioned in the article will help the reader "survive." This is evident in "The Shy Girl's Guide to Fitness Classes" (Mar. 2016, pp.77-79) and "Your Acne Survival Guide" (Mar. 2016, pp. 64-69), where the writers give advice on how the first-timer can "actually have fun" at a fitness class and "how to deal" with breakouts.

Cosmopolitan

Cosmopolitan had a different take on mental health. This magazine encourages the "fun, fearless female," which was evident in the content. With a clear emphasis on stress-related articles, Cosmopolitan diluted the harsh reality of mental health by explaining how stress results in a poor sex life and acne. For example, stress was mentioned in the February 2016 issue, "When Did Food Become So Scary?" as the reasoning for a "panic-attack inducing nightmare." Cosmopolitan, however, did highlight issues that are relevant to its readers, including the struggles of menstruation, body image, career dilemmas, and drug use. When anxiety or depression was discussed, it was typically linked to stress, with the exception of the article "Hot and Hilarious: Jessica Williams" (Mar. 2016, pp. 48-49), in which anxiety was the sole focus. Cosmopolitan paid attention to topics that are often associated with mental health including sexual assault, violence, and suicide, but the mental health keywords were not used.

The Oprah Magazine

The Oprah Magazine was the leader in mental health discussion with the help of its three-part series beginning in February 2016—"The State of Our Minds." Prior to that, *The Oprah Magazine* averaged 3.3 mentions in each issue, from November 2015 to January 2016. The articles focused on mental health in a lighter fashion, such as the benefits of vanilla for reducing anxiety in an article titled "Feeling Good: Scents of the Season" (Dec. 2015, pp. 121). Following the implementation of this three-part series, the discussion of mental health more than doubled with an average of 7.6 mentions each issue from February 2016 to April 2016. The content of the articles in "The State of Our Minds" was candid and recounted personal experiences from women of varying ages, races, and backgrounds. It was diverse in its discussion of mental health issues and had a fairly equal distribution of anxiety, depression, and stress. Headlines included "8 Steps to Inner Peace" (Feb. 2016, pp. 100) and "My Bipolar Opposite" (Feb. 2016, pp. 112).

The Oprah Magazine differed from Cosmopolitan and Seventeen in the amount of medical language and expert dialogue used. The latter magazines did not have any articles written by medical professionals, whereas The Oprah Magazine had several articles and quotes from psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and mental health professionals. The Oprah Magazine also had statistics by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Screening for Mental Health, and the National Alliance for Caregiving. The Oprah Magazine's mental health content was primarily written in first-person through a personal narrative, but intertwined facts and figures to give the content more depth and credibility.

Three Magazines, Three Approaches

Seventeen and Cosmopolitan shared more similarities in their content than *The Oprah Magazine*. The two incorporated similar language in their articles, while mostly focusing on stress, followed by anxiety and depression. They, of course, took different approaches. Seventeen relied heavily on personal narratives, and Cosmopolitan seldom used first-person narratives to explain mental health issues.

V. Conclusions

This study set out to examine how mental health is discussed in three women's magazines: Seventeen, Cosmopolitan, and The Oprah Magazine. The content analysis showed that anxiety and depression are not mentioned to the same extent as stress.

Imbalanced Representation

As highlighted in these three popular women's magazines, stress is the most mentioned mental health issue. Anxiety and depression are still not well-represented in women's magazines, especially with younger target audiences. Despite the mention of stress, it is not often used to describe a mental health condition. Rather, stress is a description of an emotional state and perceived as a condition that can be easily managed. Anxiety is generally used in conjunction with stress and is seldom defined as a serious mental health condition. The words "anxious" and "stressed" are used interchangeably and depression is still stigmatized in women's magazines. While the magazines used these keywords, it is apparent that the terms were misused and diluted, lessening their impact and mental health association.

Presentation and the Objectification of Mental Health

Mental health is perceived as a condition that can be managed. Magazines present simple solutions including meditation, healthy diets, and solid friendships. Medication and psychiatric aid are rarely brought into the picture, with the exception of *The Oprah Magazine*. Personal narratives and potential consequences of the condition are another strategy employed by women's magazines to inform readers about these heavy subjects.

The objectification theory was present in all three women's magazines. Mental health was most often linked to sex, appearance, and relationships. While objectification was not explicitly mentioned as the reason for a poor mental health condition, the content suggested this to be true through the notion of managing current mental health conditions and the association between emotional wellbeing and sexual partnerships. Mental health is a personal experience fueled by self-objectification and the relationship between personal narratives and mental health mentions in the magazines supports this notion (Harper & Tiggemann, 2007).

Destigmatizing Mental Illness

Mental illness is prevalent in women, but many fail to receive treatment because they are viewed by society as being an "emotional woman" (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2010). Many articles related to the mental health in *Seventeen* and *Cosmopolitan* were linked to menstruation, relationships, and sex. This implies that a woman's hormones are at fault for her poor mental health, as previous research suggests. These findings are significant because it suggests that the stigma surrounding mental health has yet to be shattered. Mental illness is still viewed as taboo and does not align with being fun, fearless, or confident. Mental health conditions among women, such as anxiety or depression, are often treated like a secondhand condition of being a woman, but they are serious conditions that can affect both men and women alike.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations to this study. A combined issue of *Seventeen* for January/February likely affected the findings. Another limitation is related to the number of coders. Because the author performed this study alone, it is likely that interpretation bias may arise, especially in determining the methods used to discuss mental health by the various publications.

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Appendix

Trends in Mental Health in Seventeen: Number of Articles Supporting Depression, Anxiety, and Stress

Illness	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Themes	Article title/ Month, Year	Article title/ Month, Year	Article title/ Month, Year
1.Reasoning for			
2. Management of			
3. Consequences of			
4. Co-existing condition			
5. Personal narrative			

Deconstructing the Empowering and Disempowering Messages in *Seventeen* Magazine

Lindsey Lanquist

Journalism Elon University

Abstract

Women's magazines have long struggled to balance their desire to empower women with their financial need to disempower them—thus providing readers with ambivalent messages. This research examined the ways in which a popular teen magazine, Seventeen, navigates this balance. Through a two-part critical analysis grounded in feminist theory, this study analyzed empowering and disempowering messages the magazine sent its readers in two of its most recent issues. Findings suggested the magazine is more empowering than it is disempowering, but it could improve by increasing inclusion of diverse readers and halting its perpetuation of conventional beauty standards.

I. Introduction

Women's magazines have long presented a conflict between building women up and cutting them down. Situated at the intersection of well-intentioned media outlet and vessel for publishing advertisements, women's magazines have struggled to balance their desire to empower women with their financial need to disempower them—thus providing readers with ambivalent messages. Flipping through the pages of *Cosmopolitan*, *InStyle*, or *Glamour*, an individual can expect to find messages about being confident in one's own skin on one page and instructions on how to get "flat abs" or a "hot body" on the next.

While considered trivial by many, women's magazines are vital to creating an empowering space for women to inhabit in society; when much of American culture is men-oriented, women need an outlet that features women-oriented content written by women, and women's magazines fill that void. As journalist and activist Naomi Wolf explained, "The relationship between the woman reader and her magazine is so different from that between a man and his that they aren't in the same category. A man reading *Popular Mechanics* or *Newsweek* is browsing through just one perspective among countless others of general [men]-oriented culture ... A woman reading *Glamour* is holding women-oriented mass culture between her two hands" (Wolf, 1991).

Perhaps the most interesting case study of dissonant messages in women's magazines is *Seventeen*, an American publication marketed at teenagers. Targeting one of the most vulnerable and malleable demographics in the country (Siebel-Newsom, 2011), *Seventeen* does not just have the responsibility to instill confidence in women; it has the responsibility to instill confidence in fragile, adolescent women who are enduring a multitude of transitions in their physical, emotional, and social lives (Bergland, 2013).

Keywords: Seventeen, feminism, empowering, disempowering, adolescence Email: lindseylanguist@gmail.com

This undergraduate project was conducted as a partial requirement of a research course in communications.

This magnifies the potential effects of the magazine's content on its readers, thus amplifying *Seventeen*'s responsibility as a media outlet.

Historically, *Seventeen* has taken this duty to its readers seriously. In August 2012, the magazine pledged to stop digitally altering photos as part of its "Body Peace Treaty." This decision was the result of a Change.org petition created by a 14-year-old girl receiving more than 80,000 signatures. Ann Shoket, *Seventeen*'s editor-in-chief at the time, emphasized that the magazine "never has, never will" digitally alter(ed) the bodies or faces of the models it features and will only use photos of "real girls and models who are healthy" (Hu, 2012). The magazine has also consistently framed itself as the reader's older sister—its mission being to "talk about the tricky stuff you [readers] don't want to discuss with anyone else" and to keep its readers from being embarrassed. "Don't worry, it's just us girls," Shoket (2013) wrote in her October 2013 Editor's Letter.

Despite this positive step forward, *Seventeen* still publishes content perpetuating conventional beauty standards—running pieces that emphasize looking smaller, being tan, and attracting boys. This paper will critically investigate two of the most recent issues of *Seventeen* magazine, carefully weighing the empowering content against the disempowering content through a two-part analysis, to draw conclusions about how *Seventeen* has succeeded and failed to instill a sense of confidence in its readers.

II. Literature Review

The following literature review shows how society and mass media influenced woman to respond to beauty in a disempowering way.

"Beauty" as a disempowering concept

Feminist philosopher Bartky (1997) draws on the Foucauldian concept of the "panopticon," a cylindrical prison structure, to illustrate patriarchal power structures at work in society. Women are the prisoners of this panopticon, constantly self-disciplining by dieting, exercising, shaving, waxing, applying makeup, etc. Bartky argues that women commit these actions not because they want to—many of these activities are painful and time-consuming—but because they are expected to by an amorphous disciplinarian: the "male gaze." Furthermore, these behaviors have become so internalized and deeply engrained in women's day-to-day activities that it is hard to pinpoint the source of the "male gaze;" the disciplinarian is "everywhere and … nowhere," in Bartky's words, and tied to a variety of institutions—school, family, friends, the workplace, the anonymous patriarchal "other," etc. This nebulousness further disempowers women as it obscures their notion of where the power actually lies (Bartky, 1997, p.95).

This Foucauldian notion of normalization through self-discipline is reiterated in the work of feminist philosopher Heyes (2007), who counters the contemporary conception that the outer body is an expression of some kind of core inner self. Heyes rejects the philosophical model of the self as an "object with a [unique] inner essence," saying this model ignores the greater, intersubjective context surrounding the embodied self. She then applies this argument to the examples of Weight Watchers, plastic surgery, and sexual reassignment surgery to show that these processes of normalization are more so "mechanisms of docility" than "gestures toward recognition" of an inner self (Heyes, 2007).

The clearest criticism of the beauty industry comes from journalist and activist Wolf (1991), who theorizes that the "beauty ideal" was established to "distract" women when they gained power, legal recognition, and professional success—essentially rendering the "feminine mystique" obsolete in the process. This beauty ideal, or "myth" as Wolf calls it, is omnipresent; it influences the dolls people buy their children, the personalities people see on the news, and, most pertinently to this paper, the content people consume in their magazines. This beauty myth is the result of the political economy of the media, which dictates how content decisions are made; since magazines are supported by advertisements, the editors are indebted to them and must make content selections consistent with those advertising messages. "Our magazines simply reflect our own dilemma: Since much of their message is about women's advancement, much of the beauty myth must accompany it and temper its impact ... It is understood that some kinds of thinking about 'beauty' would alienate advertisers, while others promote their products" (Wolf, 1991).

Women and the media

Much time has been dedicated to researching the ways in which women are systematically disempowered by the media. Only 16 percent of film protagonists are female, female characters are as likely to be wearing revealing clothing in G-rated movies as in R-rated movies, and 79 percent of the women represented on television are in their teens, 20s, and 30s, despite only making up 39 percent of the population (Siebel-Newsom, 2011). Of the 6,111 films in the Bechdel Test's database, only 57 percent pass all three "tests," meaning 43 percent of those movies either don't have two named women in them, don't have two named women who talk to each other, and/or have a men-centric premise ("Bechdel Test Movie List," n.d.). The average number of news stories about girls and women is less than 20 percent, and the majority of broadcast news duos are comprised of a young, attractive woman and an older, not necessarily attractive man (Siebel-Newsom, 2011). Not to mention, in John Boehner's first four weeks as speaker of the house, he was on the cover of five national weekly magazines, whereas in Nancy Pelosi's four years as speaker, she was not put on a single weekly magazine cover. This "symbolic annihilation" limits women and girls' conceptions of what they can achieve; as Gloria Steinem said, "You can't be what you can't see" (Siebel-Newsom, 2011).

Moreover, adolescent media engagement in the United States is at an all-time high. American teenagers spend 31 hours per week watching television, 17 hours per week listening to music, three hours per week watching movies, four hours per week reading magazines, and 10 hours a week online. That amounts to 10 hours and 45 minutes of media consumption each day (Siebel-Newsom). When one considers how oppressive many of these media messages are to women, it is hardly surprising that 53 percent of teenage girls are unhappy with their bodies, and that number increases to 78 percent by age 17 (Siebel-Newsom). "Girls get the message from very early on that the most important thing is how they look—that their value, their worth, depends on that. And boys get the message that this is what's important about girls" (Siebel-Newsom). 65 percent of women and girls have an eating disorder, 17 percent of teenagers engage in self-injurious behavior like cutting or burning, and the number of cosmetic surgeries performed on youth under 19 years of age tripled from 1997 to 2007 (Siebel-Newsom).

Past research

Previous research on *Seventeen* magazine looked specifically at how the magazine addresses sexuality, romance, relationships, and gender roles (Carpenter, 1998; Jochen, Valkenburg, & Yoshi, 2007). Two studies analyzed how *Seventeen* socializes its readers through adolescence and how these socializations change as sociocultural shifts are made over time (Peirce, 1990; Schlenker, Caron, & Halteman, 1998). The study most resembling this paper's approach was "The Making and Unmaking of Body Problems in *Seventeen* Magazine," which addressed the contradictory messages the magazine sends to its readers regarding body image (Ballentine & Ogle, 2009). The researchers found that *Seventeen*'s messages about body image were rife with ambivalence; "Much of the body-related content . . . promoted the dominant female beauty ideal of a thin and toned body. However, in some articles, authors problematized for readers mainstream ideologies about the body and provided them with strategies for resisting cultural pressures to be thin" (p. 298).

For this study two research questions were asked based on literature review:

RQ1: In quantitative terms, what is the ratio of empowering content to disempowering content when it comes to overall messages sent by *Seventeen* magazine through its articles?

RQ2: When these articles are analyzed from a deeper, more qualitative standpoint, what empowering and disempowering messages are they really sending to readers?

III. Methods

This study used the method of critical analysis to determine the ways in which *Seventeen* magazine directly and indirectly empowered or disempowered readers through articles appearing in two issues (June/July and August 2015). These editions were the two most recently released at the time this study began.

The critical analysis in this study was two-fold. First, magazine articles were analyzed based on the messages they communicated at first glance (through headlines primarily). These articles were categorized as *empowering*, *disempowering*, both *empowering* and *disempowering*, or *neutral*, and these categories were analyzed quantitatively. Articles were then read through a deeper, more critical lens to see what other messages were being conveyed through the fine print. This qualitative step (a "don't judge a book by its cover" approach, if you will) added a level of depth to the research, giving a more holistic picture of what the magazine was really communicating. For example, an article that seemed *empowering* from its headline could contain contradictory and potentially harmful language in its body.

Sample

Drawing on Carpenter's (1998) previously mentioned study, the unit of analysis for this study was an *article*. In this study, the operational definition for the term *article* extends to cover a variety of storytelling forms: interviews, sidebars, personal essays, and, of course, traditional articles. This definition excludes tables of content, fashion and beauty editorial spreads (more image-based than text-based), fine print pages (for sweepstakes), advertisements, and images. The covers of both issues were also included in this definition. There were 76 articles in total.

Procedure: Part I

As mentioned earlier, this study involved a two-step critical analysis of *Seventeen* magazine articles. The first quantitative step labeled each article as being one of the following: *empowering*, *disempowering*, both *empowering* and *disempowering*, or *neutral*. For an article to be considered *empowering*, it needed to help the reader further the reader's development in some way. For an article to be considered *disempowering*, it needed to seemingly exclude or limit the reader. Articles categorized as *empowering* and *disempowering* involved conflicting messages—simultaneously helping the reader while also limiting them. *Neutral* articles did not necessarily empower or disempower the reader; they simply existed and likely did not impact the reader (a page about horoscopes is neither harmful nor particularly helpful, for example).

This study drew from a 1998 study conducted by Schlenker, Caron, and Halteman in its creation of coding categories to guide the classification process. They used the categories of appearance, male-female relations, home, self-development, career development, and political/world issues. The first three categories were labeled traditional, and the latter three feminist (close equivalents to this study's disempowering and empowering, respectively). This study expanded these six into the following coding criteria:

- 1. Appearance: reinforcements of conventional beauty standards, using clothing/beauty as a means to adhere to trends as opposed to a method of creativity/artistic expression,
- 2. Male-female relations: reliance on men, emphasis on pleasing men,
- 3. Superficiality: popularity, valuing image over authentic self,
- 4. Exclusion: lack of representation for atypical gender characteristics, body types, race, sexuality, socioeconomic status,
- 5. Self-development: health, confidence, emphasis on creativity/individuality, hard work, independence, education,
- 6. Relationship development: friendships, romance, family, community,
- 7. *Needs-meeting*: embarrassment management, encouragement, information provision, reader importance, and
- 8. *Inclusion*: concerted inclusion of atypical gender characteristics, body types, race, sexuality, socioeconomic status (SES).

Categories 1-4 correspond with *disempowerment*, because they perpetuate conventions many guiding feminist philosophers would consider limiting, and categories 5-8 correspond with *empowerment*, because they focus on growth and development based on the immediate needs of the readers. Each article's headline and general presentation was analyzed, then labeled using the various sub-categories listed above, which were not mutually exclusive. Based on its sub-category classification, the article was then grouped under one of the larger categories—*empowering*, *disempowering*, *empowering* and *disempowering*, or

neutral.

An article about avoiding bad breath to become a better kisser, for example, would be labeled as *embarrassment management* (it can be embarrassing to have bad breath) and *male-female relations* (the emphasis is on another person—likely a man). The article would not be labeled as *romance*, because it is not encouraging the reader to be in a romantic relationship for its benefits; it is simply helping those who already are. Because *embarrassment management* is an *empowering* sub-category and *male-female relations* is a *disempowering* one, the overall article would be grouped under the *empowering and disempowering* classification.

There are two points worth noting in regard to this portion of methodology. First, this study did not code for gender in the *exclusion* or *inclusion* sub-categories. *Seventeen* is a young women's magazine, so it is expected that young men will be excluded from much of the content. That is not to say this study advocates this exclusion of male readers, but that seemed like a topic for another study entirely. Instead, this paper was more focused on how *Seventeen* marketed content to its female readers—did it take into account female readers who strayed from traditional norms of femininity, for example?

Procedure: Part II

The second step in the critical analysis involved taking a deeper, more qualitative look at the articles. While headlines and general article presentation may convey one subject, a thorough read through a piece can reveal other messages. These can be as nuanced as a brief sentence perpetuating heteronormativity, to a paragraph overtly disempowering women who are not thin.

In order to gain an understanding of these messages in a way that was comprehensible and organized, many of the coding criteria from the quantitative step of the methodology were employed. Many sentences, descriptions, or paragraphs within the bodies of the articles could still be categorized under these criteria; this qualitative analysis simply allowed for a more detailed read of the articles by acknowledging the reality of the gray area journalistic storytelling—a single article can often carry conflicting messages. Articles were read neutrally until an example of *empowerment*, *disempowerment*, or simultaneous *empowerment* and disempowerment arose. The specific sentence or paragraph in question was then logged as an example to be examined further in the Discussion portion of this paper. Some articles contained several sentences and/or paragraphs that became pertinent to this part of the analysis, while others contained none. This step therefore helped illustrate the complexity and variety of messages *Seventeen* readers must navigate as they determine how to engage with the information in front of them, creating a more authentic representation of the magazine's content—one that would not be available from a first look at the impressions articles make.

IV. Findings

Part I: Quantitative

A total of 76 articles were analyzed from the two issues. Among them, 39 (51%) were classified as neutral, 24 as empowering, 9 as both empowering/disempowering, and 4 as disempowering, as shown in Table I. Those classified as empowering most often fell under the categories of *needs-meeting* and *self-development*, respectively. Those classified as disempowering most often fell under the category of *exclusion*, specifically in regard to sexuality. Those classified as *empowering* and *disempowering* varied immensely.

Table 1: Overall messages conveyed through articles.

Classification	# Articles
Empowering	24
Disempowering	4
Empowering and disempowering	9
Neutral	39
Total	76

Classified as empowering were 33 articles, either classified as empowering—24--or empowering and disempowering--9. Because articles are comprised of many parts, which contain different messages, some articles were described using more than one subcategory. Thus, 13 articles were labeled as needs meeting, 13 as self-development, 11 as inclusion, and 6 as relationship development. (Refer to Table 2 for more details.)

Within the needs meeting subcategory, information provision was the most common (appearing 6 times). These elements typically offered information about fitness ("Gym 101") or health and beauty ("Skin solutions"). Embarrassment management followed by appearing 4 times, and reader importance appearing 3 times. Within self-development, health appeared 5 times, hard work 4 times, confidence and education 2 times each. Inclusion was skewed heavily to the socioeconomic status subcategory, with 7 relevant mentions (of 11 total). Finally, within relationship development, romance and family each appeared twice, and friendships and community each appeared once.

Table 2. Empowering Content

Category	Subcategory	Further subcategory	Parts
Empowering (33 articles, 43 appearances)	needs meeting (13)	Information provision	6
		Embarrassment management	4
		Reader importance	3
		Encouragement	0
	Self development (13)	Health	5
		Hard work	4
		Confidence	2
		Education	2
		Individuality	0
		Independence	0
	Inclusion (11)	Socioeconomic status	7
		Sexuality	2
		Atypical gender characteristics	1
		Body types	1
		Race	0
	relationship development (6)	Romance	2
		Family	2
		Friendships	1
		Community	1

Of the articles categorized as *disempowering*--either wholly *disempowering* (4 times) *or empowering* and *disempowering* (9 times), *appearance* was the most frequently occurring (8 times). (Refer to Table 3 for more details.) Within *appearance*, reinforcements of *conventional beauty standards* appeared 5 times, while using fashion and beauty as a means to adhere to *trends* appeared thrice. *Exclusion* appeared thrice: 2 times for being exclusive in regard to *sexuality* and 1 time for being exclusive in regard to *socioeconomic status*. Finally, *male-female relations* had appeared once, in an article focusing on *pleasing men*.

Table 3. Disempowering Parts

Category	Subcategory	Further subcategory	Parts
Disempowering (13 articles)	Appearance (8)	Conventional beauty standards	5
		Trends/fitting in	3
	Exclusion (3)	Sexuality	2
		Socioeconomic status	1
		Atypical gender characteristics	0
		Body types	0
		Race	0
	Male-female relations (1)	Emphasis on pleasing men	1
		Reliance on men	0
	Superficiality (0)	Popularity	0

Nine articles were classified as being simultaneously *empowering* and *disempowering*—a nuanced category that deserves additional attention. Articles falling under this category featured combinations of the following subcategories: *inclusion/SES* with *appearance/trends* ("Trends under \$50"), *self-development/health* with *appearance/conventional beauty standards* ("Look tan tonight!"), *needs-meeting/information provision* with *appearance* ("Your summer skin issues"), *self-development/education* with *exclusion/SES* ("The perfect college visit"), *needs-meeting/embarrassment management* with *male-female relations/emphasis on pleasing men* ("Prep for your perfect makeout"), *self-development/health* with *appearance/conventional beauty standards* ("5 ways to look tanner"), *needs-meeting/embarrassment management* with *appearance/conventional beauty standards* ("How to survive ... a hairy situation"), *relationship development/romance* with *exclusion/sexuality* ("What he's thinking"), and *needs-meeting/information provision* with *appearance/trends* ("Campus chic").

Part II: Qualitative

Messages contained within the fine print of articles added another level of nuance and complexity to the analysis. Many articles classified as *neutral* remained *neutral* in what they were communicating (especially those that were image-heavy, as images were excluded from this study), but several were rife with messages that subtly *empowered* and *disempowered* readers. The horoscopes pages of both issues, for example, seemed generally harmless, but they contained numerous contradictions; many horoscopes referenced crushes using masculine language and friendships using feminine language, perpetuating the heteronormative expectation that *Seventeen*'s readers—who are mainly female—can only have male love interests and female social ones. That said, the horoscopes also suggested that readers combat conventional dating expectations by "making the first move" as opposed to remaining passive and letting their male love interest come to them.

For the most part, articles that seemed overwhelming *empowering* or *disempowering* at first glance contained consistent messages within; features on entrepreneurial women remained *empowering* and inspiring throughout, while pages dedicated to expensive trendy products remained superficial and *Socioeconomic-exclusive*. There were, however, some exceptions. The only article in either issue dedicated to addressing curvy bodies—a seemingly *empowering* piece—was full of suggestions for looking thinner, clearly perpetuating *conventional beauty standards* in a *disempowering* way. The "Traumarama" sections also proved to be more complicated than they appeared. These pages are dedicated to comforting readers by featuring embarrassing stories shared by fellow adolescent girls (*needs-meeting/embarrassment management*)—a noble pursuit. That said, by classifying some of the stories as embarrassing (one about having an allergic reaction and one about appearing to have unshaved armpits), the magazine reinforced ideas about natural processes being unfeminine, unattractive, and embarrassing—thus disempowering readers who have allergies or have chosen not to shave their armpits, for example.

Finally, all articles initially classified as *empowering* and *disempowering* unsurprisingly contained similarly dissonant messages within. Some examples include: "I get more compliments about my curly hair than anything else—it's my signature" (celebrating the *individual* while *superficial* external praise) and "#sororitylifegoals" (*encouraging community development* while *excluding* those who choose to opt out of this classically feminine Greek Life path).

V. Discussion

The quantitative results of this study suggest that *Seventeen*'s content is more empowering than disempowering. Much of this can be attributed to the fact that *information provision* belongs to the *needs meeting* subcategory, which fell under the classification of empowering content. If any media outlet is doing its job properly, it should be *meeting the needs* of its readers by *providing information* specifically tailored to them. Still, the magazine scored high in other further subsubcategory, such as *embarrassment management*. These further subcategories are specific to *Seventeen* magazine and its presumably fragile and insecure adolescent reader base. By scoring high in these areas, the magazine's editors show that the brand is committed to supporting its readers through the ups and downs of adolescence.

The magazine also scored high in the *self-development* area, showing that *Seventeen* places an emphasis on helping its readers grow creatively, healthily, intellectually, and professionally. Examples of this encouragement of growth included book recommendations, stories of girls who have pursued their passions and attained success, advice from celebrities telling readers to embrace their uniqueness, and fashion stories emphasizing creativity and individuality as opposed to trendiness or assimilation. The magazine placed an emphasis on *relationship development* as well as making some efforts to appeal to a variety of readers (inclusion).

Even though the magazine was found to be more empowering than disempowering, the results suggested significant areas for improvement—especially when articles were analyzed from a deeper, qualitative standpoint. As mentioned earlier, articles classified as disempowering most often fell under the category of appearance—primarily due to Seventeen's perpetuation of conventional beauty standards. Several articles encouraged girls to "look tanner," and one focused entirely on getting rid of body hair. Not to mention, one seemingly *empowering* article recommended girls to use certain foundations to "perfect their complexion IRL and on Insta." Bartky and Heyes would regard these methods of appearance management as forms of self-discipline, imposed on girls (and thus, on Seventeen readers) by patriarchal society. The process of getting tan requires subjecting the skin to potential cancers if done the "natural way." If one opts for healthier options like self-tanners (which Seventeen recommends), one must still dedicate immense amounts of time, effort, and money to get the even, natural-looking bronze glow the magazine suggests; Bartky speaks specifically about the process of removing body hair in her essay, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power," explaining that it is both painful and time-consuming; and both Bartky and Wolf explain that the typical process of putting on makeup has more to do with painting a face of conventional beauty than it does expressing some core sense of self (Heyes would take issue with anyway, as she considers the self and the body inseparable).

Another major area for improvement—which became more apparent in the qualitative portion of the analysis—was the magazine's tendency to exclude readers who do not fit into neat, conventional boxes when it comes to gender and sexuality. Though it is probably safe for Seventeen to assume its reader base is primarily female (that is their target audience, after all), the magazine risks alienating readers who are not heterosexual or who do not adhere to traditional gender norms in its regular use of heteronormative language. The magazine used the term "girl crush" several times in both issues—especially the August "Crush" issue—to describe women platonically admiring other women. This term trivializes women who genuinely are romantically and sexually interested in other women. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, the horoscope sections of both issues used feminine pronouns in reference to readers' friends and masculine pronouns in reference to readers' romantic or sexual interests; this is clearly heteronormative and excludes those who have friends who are men, or romantic or sexual interests who are women. This would be an easily avoidable issue if the magazine were to adopt gender-neutral language in cases such as these, which it managed to do several times in both issues by using the terms "a certain someone" or "crush" instead of generalizing with the pronoun "him."

Examples of dissonant, or simultaneously empowering and disempowering, content varied immensely. One example was an article titled "Prep for your perfect makeout;" while the

article scored positively in the needs-meeting/embarrassment management category—providing ways for readers to feel most confident in potentially vulnerable situations—it scored negatively in malefemale relations, because it suggested that girls who do not partake in this pre-makeout regimen would not please their partner and should thus be insecure. Other examples included the multiple stories run on self-tanning; these articles reinforced the *conventional beauty standard* of needing to be tan to look good. but they also scored high in self-development/health for encouraging girls to take healthier steps to achieve this standard of beauty. Seventeen could have easily incorporated language that normalizes the decision to be tan (in a healthy way) as well as the decision not to be—therefore empowering readers to make choices about their appearances instead of forcing one standard of beauty upon them. A final example of dissonant messages is an article titled "The perfect college visit." While this piece scored positively in the self-development/education category, it scored negatively in the exclusion/socioeconomic status category. because it provided no alternatives for readers who could not afford to go on college visits or those who could not afford to go to college at all. This was particularly disappointing because the magazine tended to be inclusive of various socioeconomic statuses throughout; several articles featured products within a certain price range to appeal to readers who could not afford to spend much on fashion and beauty products, and both issues offered sweepstakes providing free gifts to lucky readers.

Also of note is the fact that the magazine did not score high in either the *inclusion* or *exclusion* categories in regard to further subcategories of *race* or *body type*. The magazine did run one story entirely focused on *body type inclusion* ("Curvy Confidence"), though, as mentioned earlier, the story's copy read, "A drawstring anorak instantly makes your middle look smaller." This reinforced the idea that one must look "small" to be attractive—a contradiction that effectively negated the positive message the story seemed to be sending. Aside from that, no strong messages were sent regarding race or body type. This was likely due to the fact that this study focused solely on communications through written content; if another critical investigation were to be conducted analyzing the images in *Seventeen*, findings would likely be dramatically different in the *body type* and *race*, further subcategories under *inclusion* and *exclusion*. (An argument could also be made for the classification of the tanning stories being exclusive to race, but this would likely be more apparent in image content than written content.)

VI. Conclusion

This study sought to achieve two objectives: critically analyze the messages *Seventeen* magazine sends to its readers by determining the ratio of *disempowering* content to *empowering* content in two recent issues, and to analyze the more complex give-and-take exchange of ideas within articles that reveal more complex and conflicting messages. Prior studies have found that *Seventeen* sends contradictory messages to its readers—a result that the quantitative side of this paper does not support since this study found that content was overwhelming classified as *empowering*, and one the qualitative side would confirm since even seemingly *neutral* articles, like "horoscopes," were interpreted otherwise when they were thoroughly analyzed.

Much of Seventeen's content is geared toward meeting readers' needs through information provision and toward helping readers develop their professional, intellectual, and social capacities. It is in these ways that Seventeen is providing its readers with empowering messages. While content was quantitatively overwhelmingly positive, a qualitative analysis revealed that the magazine still sent many disempowering and dissonant messages. Areas for improvement include using more inclusive language—especially when it comes to gender norms and sexuality—and minimizing allusions to conventional beauty. The magazine could instead use gender-neutral language and focus on fashion as an outlet for creativity and individuality (both of which it did in a few articles).

This analysis was limited in terms of both time and resources. Only two of the several hundred issues of *Seventeen* magazine that have been published since 1944 were analyzed for this study, and both came from the same year. There is room for further exploration of how content has shifted from decade to decade, from editor-in-chief to editor-in-chief, and even from month to month within the same year. This study could also be expanded to include image analysis in addition to the written content analysis; though certainly

more nuanced, visual messages are often as significant to magazine communication as clearly expressed written messages are, and this dimension could enhance the conversation surrounding empowering and disempowering messages in magazines. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, one person conducted all the quantitative coding for this study. While the coding criteria were made as specific as possible to ensure objectivity, there was still room for human biases. Future studies could include multiple coders to ensure greater objectivity.

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