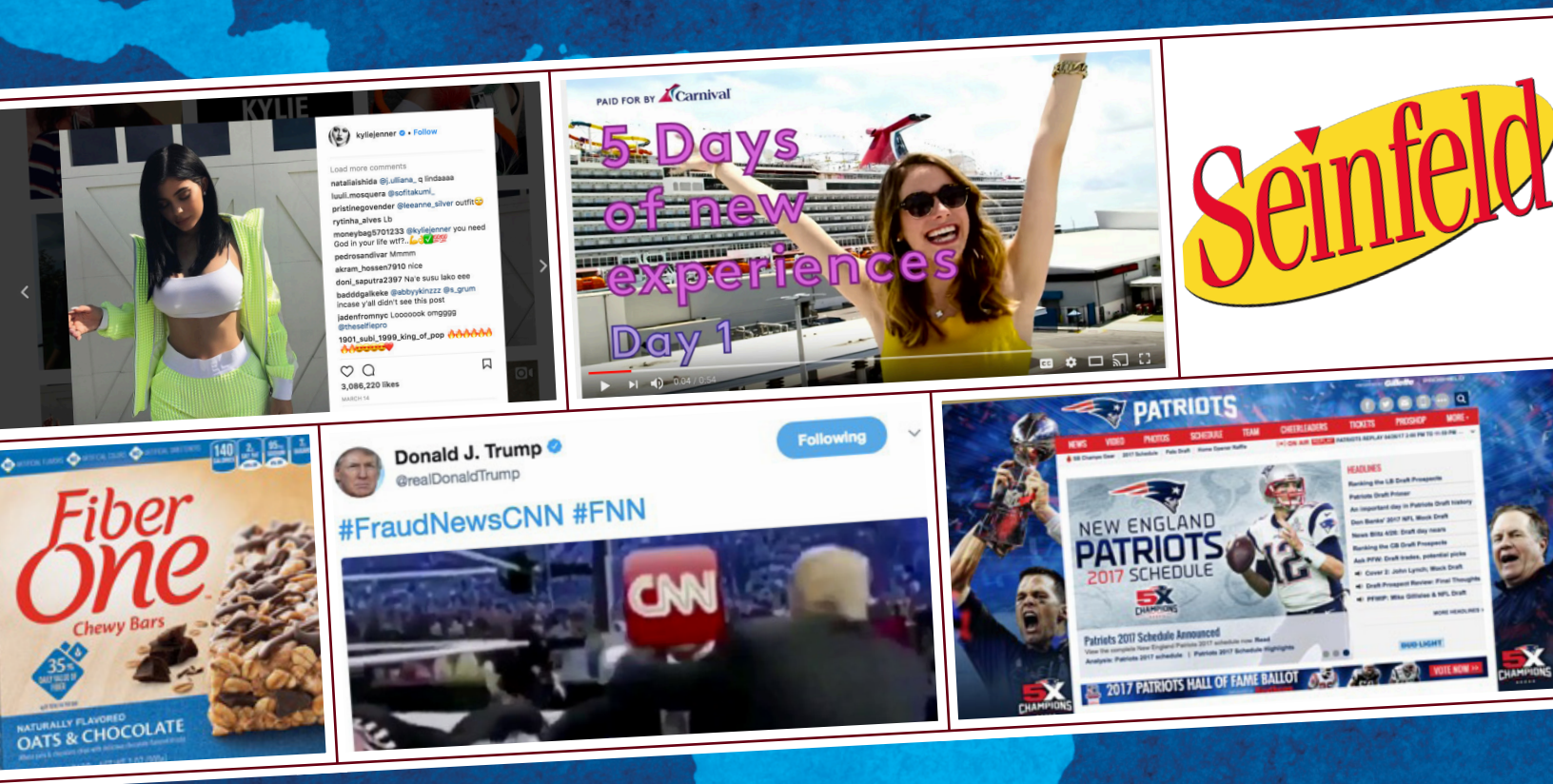# ELON JOURNAL

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ELON UNIVERSITY | School of Communications

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The three purposes of the journal are:

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• To serve as a repository for quality work to benefit future students seeking models for how to do undergraduate research well, and

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This journal reflects what we enjoy seeing in our students -- intellectual maturing.

As 18-year-olds, some students enter college possibly wanting to earn a degree more than they want to earn an education. They may question whether communication theory and research have anything to do with their future. But they get excited at studying great ideas and topical issues.

These published articles make us aware of the solitary hours that students spend in research and the untold hours in which student and teacher-mentor work together to revise a paper for public consumption.

This journal celebrates the life of the intellect through undergraduate research. It represents the intellectual maturing that occurs by the senior year, reinforcing all that we think a university should be.

Dr. Paul Parsons, Dean
School of Communications

Editorial Board

Twenty-eight faculty members in Elon's School of Communications served as the Editorial Board that selected 11 undergraduate research papers for the 2017 fall issue.

From more than 100 research papers written in advanced Elon School of Communications classes, 32 papers were submitted to the journal by communications students through the encouragement and mentoring of capstone teachers and other professors in the school.

Professors who served as the Editorial Board were Lorraine Ahearn, Bill Anderson, Janna Anderson, Vanessa Bravo, Naeemah Clark, David Copeland, Vic Costello, Kelly Furnas, Kenn Gaither, Jessica Gisclair, Don Grady, Sana Haq, Anthony Hatcher, Dan Haygood, Jooyun Hwang, Derek Lackaff, Harlen Makemson, Barbara Miller, William Moner, Phillip Motley, Tom Nelson, George Padgett, Paul Parsons, Glenn Scott, Jessalynn Strauss, Amanda Sturgill, 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

Among many topics covered in this issue, four articles covered the analysis of print media and social media content. Two articles critiqued the content of TV programs. Four papers dealt with the effects of media contents on consumers. Lastly, two papers described changes of commercial packages and the application of advanced technology to social media, respectively.

After analysis of two Greek newspapers about a referendum on a financial bailout, Rempoutzakos showed that both papers employed framing techniques to promote their agenda and portray the referendum along the frames of "YES" and "NO" referendum campaigns in general. After analyzing articles from the 24 issues of *Cosmopolitan*, Hunsberger found content fluctuated between the negative and positive framing of feminist ideas and these messages mostly did not align with second-wave feminism. Dunne found that three newspapers framed opioid addiction as a public health issue and were more favorable to its victims in comparison with the crack epidemics in the late 1980s. Finally, Anderson studied the tweeting habits of Donald Trump and found that the U.S. president uses the social media platform to criticize both Republican and Democrat lawmakers, employs tactics to delegitimize the press, and receives high levels of engagement.

Through extensive literature review, Herndon found that sitcoms like Seinfeld emphasized consumption and communality within the show and did not accurately represent class structure. O'Hern analyzed six TV shows to determine the prevalence and frequency of negative bipolar disorder stereotypes in 21st century television. The author found some recent progress, but suggested rooms for improvements in characterizations.

Maloney found that the Kardashian-Jenners had an unintended effect on fourth-wave feminism by sharing a semi-positive, non-purposeful feminist message with their target audience of women ages 18-34. After examining social media influencer marketing, Glucksman concluded that it has successfully changed the way that brands interact with consumers by breaking down the wall between the two. According to Osgood's study, a majority of social media users have been exposed to videos like Buzzfeed's Tasty videos, but most users have not consumed the content for cooking, but as a form of entertainment. After examining the websites of the three highest-valued franchises within the NFL teams, Echevarria found that they incorporated comprehensive branding strategies on their webpages to showcase their brand personality and interact with fans.

Chili analyzed the packages designs of granola bar brands and cereal brands and found that they were designed to communicate specific messages that shifted over time. Allsteadt found that the integration of advanced technology into social media application design will enhance consumer convenience but may create challenges because businesses need to maintain trust from consumers.

These students who had their papers accepted for publication in this issue should be congratulated for writing excellent research papers within a short period of time. Of course, as they acknowledged, it would not be possible without the guidance of their mentors and reviewers. I hope the articles in this issue will inspire students in future semesters to commit to examining essential research questions and submit their papers to this journal.

Dr. Byung Lee
Journal Editor

Elon Journal of
Undergraduate Research in Communications

Framing Theory in Newspaper Coverage of the 2015 Greek Referendum

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements in
an undergraduate senior capstone course in communications

Abstract

In 2015, the Greek prime minister announced a referendum on the country's proposed debt bailout. Media outlets shaped the referendum into "YES" and "NO" frames based on their political spectrum. A week after the referendum announcement, the Greek people overwhelmingly voted to oppose the creditors' measures. This study analyzed 14 articles each from two major Greek newspapers, Kathimerini *and* Ta Nea*. The results showed that both papers portrayed the referendum along the frames of "YES" and "NO" referendum campaigns.* Kathimerini *used more frames than* Ta Nea*, but overall neither paper strictly adhered to their campaign's framing.*

I. Introduction

In the early hours of June 27, 2015, Alexis Tsipras, the Greek prime minister (PM), announced a national Panhellenic referendum after a breakdown in negotiations during a summit between Greece and its creditors. Scheduled and conducted a week from the day of the announcement, the referendum asked Greeks to vote on a package of measures from Greece's creditors. It immediately became a hotly contested point by both sides. Critics and supporters alike grew passionate in their debate, leading to polarization. The short time frame exasperated the situation, as did rampant misinformation about the EU, the unclear issue being voted upon, and the implementation of capital control measures. After a week heavy with rallies, demonstrations, speeches, and interviews, more than 6 million votes were cast on July 5 (Greek Ministry of the Interior, July 2015). In a move that stunned both national and international experts, polls, and politicians, Greece overwhelmingly voted in favor of "No," rejecting a package of measures proposed by Greece's lenders.

As a national referendum in a country ravaged by economic depression and lackluster growth, the stakes for the negotiations were at an all-time high. Considering this, it is not surprising that news outlets from both sides of the argument promoted specific agendas. Using framing theory, a qualitative analysis of the 14 days surrounding the referendum explained the ways that two newspapers from opposite sides of the Greek political spectrum presented the 2015 Greek referendum.

II. Theory

Framing theory was applied to examine how Greek newspapers showed bias in their news reporting on the referendum. According to the theory, media select "some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text" (Entman, 1993, p. 52), presenting stories and narratives a certain way. This allowed the suppliers of a message to stress one or more elements of the story to influence public reception. News media, in particular, have been shown to follow a narrative through its coverage, stemming from socio-political leanings and agenda (DeVreese et al., 2011).

The importance of framing theory lies in media's potency to influence the audience by creating the frames that shape the referendum's coverage. A 1997 study examined the effect of different news frames in how participants felt about the Ku Klux Klan's right to protest (Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997). Their findings showed that even a subject with a certain level of notoriety can elicit support from participants if presented a certain way as to highlight relatable or understandable issues. It's notable due to the strength and permanence of the initial reception. Sloman and Fernbach (2017) examined the incredible power of baseless notions to be considered as fact once first accepted. They explain that "as a rule, strong feelings about issues do not emerge from deep understanding" (p. 172). After an audience has first formed an opinion for a story, it entrenches itself, rejecting later information, even if factual or presented by experts, that contradicts the present belief. Because of this, once a frame has been used by a newspaper, it is hard for the audience to distance itself from it, especially so if the subject was previously unaware of the reported issue.

In the case of the 2015 Greek referendum, understanding the framing power of news is pivotal to understanding the public's decision to vote. This is due to the suddenness of the referendum. As previously mentioned, people without a basis of knowledge tend to be more susceptible to ideological entrenchment after being presented with an issue. Because the referendum was a surprising announcement by the PM, Greeks did not have a pre-existing perception of the issue. This sudden and unexpected advent of a referendum allowed these newspapers to frame the issue to a much greater extent. Framing theory explains "how messages, based on certain patterns of emphasis and exclusion, can structure the thinking of the people who encounter them" (McLeod & Shah, 2015, p. 11).

III. Background

Greece between 2009-2015

To understand the factors that led to the 2015 referendum in Greece and why the news media framed it a certain way, readers need to have background information for Greece's history since the economic recession of 2008. Two years after reelection, the then-PM Konstantinos Karamanlis of the New Democracy party (ND) called for emergency elections in 2009, partly to strengthen his authority in the Greek Parliament, and partly to exhibit popular confidence in the face of the looming recession. During the campaign, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement party, PASOK, found great popularity after its leader, George Papandreou, began using the slogan "Money Exists" (Nedos, 2014). Utilizing a positive message that implied the need for no changes, PASOK emerged victorious with more than 3 million votes in 2009 (Greek Ministry of the Interior, 2009) from the campaign, gaining autonomy to govern in parliament (*Kathimerini*, 2009), even though its Papandreou's government soon collapsed in 2012 (Greek Ministry of the Interior, 2012).

Papandreou's government revealed the nation's disastrous financial situation, highlighting its mishandling of the crisis, which led to rampant unemployment and the growth of Greece's national debt. Since the election, the PASOK party appeared feckless and weak, bowing to creditors' demands and burdening Greece's economy, which saw a steady and steep decline. The creditors, made up of the so-called troika–the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)— pushed their measures and negotiations, which came to be seen in Greece as draconian. Papanderou's inability to curb their influence, combined with fears he was leading the country toward a Grexit, a scenario in which Greece might exit the European Union (EU), forced him to step down as party chairman and call elections (Papadiochou, 2011).

In the ensuing campaign, ND won the election, while the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza), the outspoken critic of the PASOK administration, came in second. ND was soon painted by Syriza as the "old guard," equally weak to PASOK. Antonis Samaras, the new PM, sought to govern conservatively, slowly growing the economy and working with the lenders in restoring the Greek economy. Despite notable economic recovery (Nika, 2016), Syriza managed to sway public opinion, and defeat ND in September 2015, taking control of the government (Greek Ministry of the Interior, January 2015).

Greek Referendum

Having risen to power, the Syriza party, a harsh critic of the EU and Greece's lenders, began to govern for the first time since its inception. The party was not, however, greeted warmly in European circles, having been responsible for numerous incendiary comments toward them. Alexis Tsipras, the new PM, began negotiations for new bailout measures. Despite popular pressure to bring about a swift resolution to the negotiations, the EU economic summits were continuously extended into the summer. Giannis Varoufakis, minister of the economy, sought to drive the EU and Greece's lenders into a deal where they would give Greece favorable terms or risk a Grexit. The tensions mounted through June, with no agreement in sight. With both sides locked in a battle for economic control over Greece, and the window for any agreement closing (Varvitsioti & Antoniou, 2015), Tsipras decided on June 27 to put up the most recent results of the negotiation to a national referendum.

The referendum was about whether Greece was to accept the bailout conditions of the Troika. The "YES" vote, which proponents claimed would show a Greece committed to the European ideals, willing to make changes and take hard decisions; "NO," which supporters interpreted as a strong show of Greek sovereignty and autonomy, would demand the freedom of self-determination for Greece to handle its own crisis without imposed austerity measures. Many outside Greece saw this move toward a referendum as putting too much faith in the ability of "average citizens" to decide the fate of their country, while the government felt it was a decision too important to take without the express command of the Greek people (Varoufakis, 2015). Opposition to the referendum further contended that Syriza had been elected only five months prior, and that it should decide for itself, while proponents claimed it showed true democratic spirit to hold such a referendum (Kallitsis, 2015). Immediately the campaigns for the referendum took form.

After a week of intense campaigning from both sides, during which Greece defaulted, the banks enacted Capital Controls (still active in 2017), polling predicted a very narrow win for the "NO" faction (*Kathimerini*, 07-03-2015). This prediction was quite different from the result, where the "NO" camp claimed an overwhelming victory, emerging victorious in every county in Greece (Greek Ministry of the Interior, July 2015). Having received a strong popular showing against the bailout measures, Tsipras returned to the negotiations, which had turned hostile. He was met with derision, a result of the incendiary way the "NO" campaign had framed Europe and the Troika. To complicate matters, either the Greek or European side had no consensus on what the result of the referendum meant, as the referendum packet voted upon had been outdated days prior to the vote, as the summit was still ongoing. These factors–and Tsipras' rising desperation in the face of Greece's default–led to measures much harsher than the ones the referendum rejected as too extensive. Popular opinion of Tsipras and Syriza soured, as they seemed to have grossly mishandled the situation. In response, Tsipras called elections in September, which Syriza won once more (Greek Ministry of the Interior, September 2015).

IV. Literature Review

Understanding the ways that media frame political issues is an important part of consuming media. This literature review focused on three sections. The first examined referendums in other countries through an interdisciplinary lens. The second detailed how media in other countries have framed notable political events. Following that, the frames that Greek newspapers used were examined, allowing for a more nuanced and complete approach to studying Greek newspaper frames employed in the 2015 referendum.

The study of referendums in countries beside Greece allows for an overview of how referendums are employed, what they test, and how they're decided. Referendums can be employed to show societal desires. Clarke et al. argue in a 2004 study of the 1995 Quebec referendum in Canada that the referendum is employed as a sign of direct democracy. The government used the referendum to end the Quebec question,

leaving it up to the citizens of the province to decide the matter for themselves (Clarke et al., 2004). What a referendum does is to provide political cover to both sides of the voted-upon matter: people of a country establish their own desires, and thus can't shift blame easily.

A similar case where a referendum was used to defuse blame or refrain from taking difficult political decisions can be seen in Sweden's employment of referendums. In his discussion of the Swedish system, Ruin (1996) said the following: "The political parties were all involved . . . in the five referendum campaigns, even though they never took prime responsibility for . . . them" (p. 179). According to Ruin, each referendum was used to smooth over internal disputes, settling the matter before the intra-party internal divisions could become too extensive.

A referendum can also be understood as a test of the people's faith in their government. In a 1995 article discussing the 1992 Maastricht treaty, the researchers proposed that rather than a sign of agreement or disagreement with an issue, referendums may be a show of support and trust in government (Franklin et al., 1995). The study found that both France and Denmark had unpopular governments in 1992, leading to an increased distrust of the federal Eurocentric policy. Thus, referendum results, to some extent, are decided by the people's faith in their elected officials, in addition to one's opinion on the question put forth. At the very least, it influences the perception of the pro- and anti-government positions.

These cases show intriguing parallels to Greece. In Quebec, the researchers claim that the referendum failed because it was presented as "ill-defined and unsubstantiated" with "visions of alternative political futures" (Clarke et al., 2004, p. 346). The same tension existed in Greece, where neither side (both within and outside of Greece) could agree on the exact goal of the referendum. Additionally, Syriza was accused by members of the opposition of lacking the political courage to settle the matter themselves. Considering the similar tactic from Sweden, some credence must be afforded to that theory. Furthermore, the "trust in government" approach can be used to explain the result in Greece: While both parties were unpopular, the Syriza government was considerably more popular than the ND party.

In their study of the 1992 Canadian referendum of Quebec, LeDuc and Pammett (1995), claimed that the outcome of any referendum "is even more dependent on the short-term elements of the campaign" than in elections (p. 5). This was tested by a 1999 study, which held that despite popular belief in the dramatic increase of the "Yes" campaign (which wanted to break away from Canada), a meta-analysis of polls supports a slow and gradual increase in support (Fox et al., 1999). This idea holds true for the Greek referendum as well.

Many other studies have expanded the field of political media framing. One study into the 2015 Greek referendum examined Google search analytics to predict the election. Askitas (2015) argued that people became increasingly entrenched in their beliefs over the course of the referendum, searching online for their own opinion to validate it or better understand it. This study found that the "NO" vote, which was in the majority prior to the vote itself, had grown exponentially after June 30, the day the Troika drew a line in the sand. This presents a frame of Brave Nationalism. Simply put, Syriza presented the referendum as a declaration of courage and pride in Greece. The voters were essentially asked to accept a risky gamble to prove their national pride.

Unlike Askitas' research, which relied on data from the population in question, Lundblad (2016) examined the framing of the media. In her research on the Brexit campaign, she saw an overabundance of Euroscepticism frames in the British media. She elaborates on this claim: "The most frequent media framing has presented a negative picture of the EU" (p. 13). She further explained that some papers that supported the "remain" vote didn't promote the EU as a positive, but as a lesser of two evils. Looking at the number of sales in addition to the political leanings of papers, she contends that sales-wise, the negative perception of the EU outsold the positive to the tune of 80% to 20%. Seen in this way, the Brexit referendum seems one-sided, at least regarding the value of the EU. On the same topic, Brueggemann (2016) proposes that Brexit newspaper coverage led to some voter disaffection with news portrayals of topics. According to his research, the overabundance of conflicting messages resulted in considerably reducing the significance of policy points and expert opinions. He notes that "a large group of (well-educated) voters . . . draw their vote based on both their personal attitude towards the EU as well as things that they perceived as affecting them directly" (p. 23). His point, when taken together with Lundblad's, presents the possibility that one of two identified factors that will influence the referendum vote could have been monopolized by the "Leave" campaign's frame of Euroscepticism.

It should be noted that there are some notable differences between Brexit and the Greek referendums, despite the seeming similarities one may draw between them. For one, the populace did not have significant time to prepare for the idea of a referendum, nor come to grips with its effects either way. Also, there was great confusion over what a "YES" or "NO" vote meant, to the point where even after the vote, people were still confused both inside and outside Greece. In addition, it should be noted that the Greek economy suffered a default during the lead-up to the referendum, causing tensions to escalate further, and adding a "ticking-clock" element to the referendum entirely absent from the Brexit vote. For these reasons, Brexit studies must be separated from the Greek situation, and the frames must change as well.

Based on the review of referendum studies and media framing studies, it is possible to identify frames that Greek newspapers may have used in their referendum coverage. Based on their public policies and stance toward the EU, the "NO" campaigns frames are as follows: sovereignty, economic freedom, and brave nationalism. The sovereignty frame was used to describe the referendum as a question of regaining control over the country's decision-making ability. As discussed earlier, this was a point with which Syriza gained power, by delegitimizing the parties of PASOK and ND as European cronies or puppets. The economic freedom frame helped establish this as a matter of interest to the economically–desperate Greeks, framing the question of the referendum as one of forced, and close-minded austerity, versus willing and forward-thinking economic reform. The final frame used by the "NO" campaign was brave nationalism, through which the referendum was framed as a matter of national pride. As explained previously, the decision was presented as a matter of national pride, a risk worth taking to prove one's faith in the country.

The "YES" campaign used different frames: European identity, political cowardice, and incompetence. The campaign to accept the bailout measures was framed as affirming their **European identity**, as voting in favor of the EU's proposal became a symbol of pro-Europe sentiment and trust in the Troika institutions. By extension, this framed the "NO" campaign as anti-Europe, declaring it as opposed to European ideals and standards. A second frame was **political cowardice**, framing the referendum as the act of a political party desperate to escape the burden of tough decisions while in power by passing blame for its contrary positions to the voters themselves. A third frame employed was **incompetence**. Syriza, the referendum, and the "NO" movement were framed by the "YES" camp as having failed in their elected mission, the negotiations with the creditors, and their governance. The research also explored the ways the two chosen newspapers, one right-leaning and one left-leaning, employed the above frames in setting their agenda and promoting their message.

V. Methods

This research paper examined two Greek newspapers from opposite sides of the Greek political spectrum. One article each day between June 24 and July 8, except for July 5, was chosen from each of two newspapers based on its most prominent placement on the front page. One of the two papers, *Kathimerini* prints daily, while another paper, *Ta Nea*, lacks a Sunday edition. The latter's sister paper, *Ta Nea*., *To Vima*, publishes a Sunday edition and it was included for analysis instead.

The two papers were chosen for three reasons: availability, popularity, and socio-political standing. First, both newspapers are daily and have extensive archives of their previous publications available online. The original articles from 2015 were available for research purposes. Secondly, these papers have robust circulations and were heavily relied upon in the two-week period of this study (News247, 2015). Finally, the papers reside on opposite sides of the Greek political spectrum. *Kathimerini* (Καθημερινή) is a center-right newspaper, whereas *Ta Nea* (Τα Νέα) is a center-left paper. Additionally, they are widely considered the least partisan of Greek newspapers, serving as prime examples of fact-based reporting and "accepted" journalistic practices. Because these articles are written in Greek, all the findings were translated into English, including their titles and author names.

This study examined how the three frames each come into play even in newspapers taking a semi-neutral stance on reporting the news. *Kathimerini* articles were coded for the three frames of European identity, political cowardice, and incompetence (for), while *Ta Nea* (along with *To Vima*) for sovereignty, economic freedom, and brave nationalism (for) (Refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Coding sheets for content analysis

Frame Coding Form			
Newspaper	**Frame**	**Key Concept(s)**	**Key Concept(s) in Greek**
Kathimerini	**European Identity**	Europe as friend, Greece as part of Europe	Ευρώπη ως φίλη, Ελλάδα ως μέλος της Ευρώπης
	Political Cowardice	Reflecting blame, Avoiding decisions	Προσάπτει ευθύνη, Αποφεύγει αποφάσεις
	Incompetence	Horrible negotiations, Government incompetence	Αισχρή διαπραγμάτευση, Κυβερνητική ανικανότητα
Ta Nea & To Vima	Sovereignty	Tyranny, Autonomy	Τυραννία, Αυτονομία
	Economic Freedom	European Control, European Measures	Ευρωπαϊκός έλεγχος, Ευρωπαϊκά μέτρα
	Brave Nationalism	Brave decision, "Prove something…"	Θαρραλέα απόφαση, «Να αποδείξουμε…»

VI. Results

Coverage of *"Yes" campaign by* Kathimerini

     Kathimerini articles were examined to see whether they could have used one of the three frames. The total number of articles that could have was recorded under the category of "Potential count." When these potential articles adopted the corresponding frame, their number was recorded under the column of "Realized count" (Refer to Table 2). The category of realized count was made to exclude articles from the count when their stories had nothing to do with the frame categories.

Table 2: Use of "YES" frames in *Kathimerini* articles

Frame	Potential count	Realized count	Percentage
European Identity	13	7	54%
Political Cowardice	13	6	46%
Incompetence	13	11	85%

The European identity frame was a factor in all but one article, yet only seven employed the frame. The most notable example was the centerpiece article from June 28, which boldly declared that Greece is European and it cannot be seriously contemplated as outside the EU (*Kathimerini*, 06-28-2015). Noteworthy is that this frame became an issue the moment the referendum came up. As shown in *Figure 1*, prior to June 28, the idea of an inherent European identity that Greece belonged to was ignored. *Kathimerini* employed the frame only when Greece was threatened with being taken away.
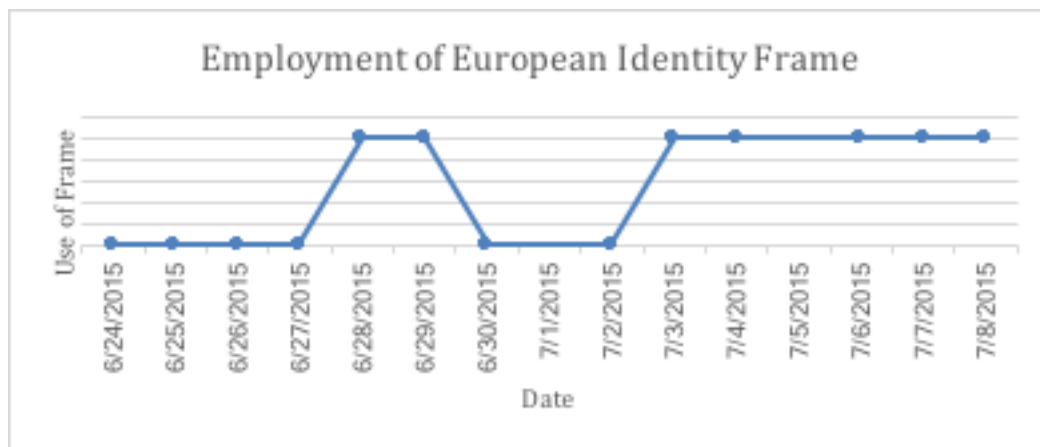

Figure 1: Employment of European Identity Frame by *Kathimerini*

The political cowardice frame could be a factor in 13 articles, but only 6 employed it. In fact, the most notable example was the centerpiece article from June 28, which boldly declared that Greece is European and it cannot be seriously contemplated as outside the EU (*Kathimerini*, 06-28-2015). What's surprising is the number of times this frame was employed in the most prominent front-page stories before and after the July 5 referendum. As shown in *Figure 2*, *Kathimerini* stayed away from this frame between June 25, when the referendum was announced, and when it ended with votes on the referendum. Shockingly, apart from the poignant dismissal of the referendum as the act of a coward when it was first announced, the newspaper left the frame alone during the referendum discussion proper.
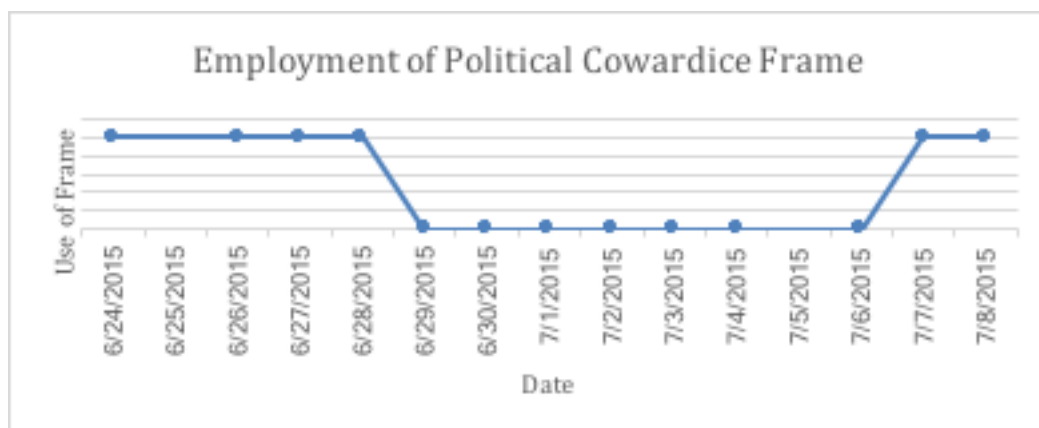

Figure 2: Employment of political cowardice frame by Kathimerini

The newspaper used the incompetence frame most often, in 11 articles. The frame was often evident multiple times in each article. The newspaper seemed to place significant value on framing the PM and his government as incompetent, often restating their negotiation and political mistakes. The most prominent example branded the government as incompetent 40 times in an article of fewer than 900 words (Jacobidis, 2015).

The content analysis showed that *Kathimerini* certainly engaged with the same frames as the "YES" campaign, but only one frame was heavily used. One article from the front-page stories stood out from the rest and deserves mention. A July 1 article stands out because even though it contains a story where each of the three frames could have been used, it is devoid of them (Antoniou, 07-01-2015). What makes this more bizarre is that it concerns problems in the Tsipras government, with internal squabbles threatening the stability of the Syriza party itself. Yet despite this, it is not framed as a matter of cowardice on the part of Tsipras or the party, nor is it depicted as a result or example of incompetence in party cohesion or governance.

Coverage of the "NO" Campaign supported by Ta Nea *(and T*o Vima*)*

The "NO" Campaign supported by *Ta Nea* (and *To Vima*) was examined with respect to the three frames of sovereignty, economic freedom, and brave nationalism. The sovereignty frame could have been a factor in 12 articles, but only 6 articles used it (Refer to Table 3). Articles that discussed the effect of the referendum on citizens lacked this frame (Chrisolaura, 07-01-2015), whereas stories about the interaction between the EU and Greece mostly used this frame (Kexagia, 07-06-2015). It seems that *Ta Nea* found the frame of Greece without power when it covered the tangible concerns of people's survival.

Table 3: Use of NO frames in *Ta Nea* & *To Vima* articles

Frame	Articles where applicable	Coding	Percentage
Sovereignty	12	6	50%
Economic Freedom	12	7	58%
Brave Nationalism	13	4	31%

The economic freedom frame was slightly more prominent: it appeared in 7 of the 12 articles in which the frame could have been used. This frame, unlike the sovereignty one, seemed to be decided by whether the content focused on the freedom to control one's own economy and the results of that freedom. When the articles presented the referendum as having disastrous results, this frame was employed to show that the problem exists due to the Troika (Kexagia, 07-24-2015). There was a clear hint of Euroscepticism embedded in these articles, but the paper didn't overuse the frame, nor employed it as a catch-all answer to legitimate woes of the citizens (Chrisolaura, 07-02-2015).

The brave nationalism frame was adopted by four articles of 13 that could have employed it. The timing of the four articles also coincided with moments of jubilation and success when the Greek government forced the Troika's hand, or put itself in a difficult position. Evidently, it was used when the situation was legitimately patriotic (Karageorgiou, 2015). It is no coincidence that this frame was employed twice by *Ta Nea*, but *Kathimerini* did not use the incompetence frame to describe Tsipras and his government.

The content analysis showed that *Ta Nea*, along with *To Vima*, engaged with the "NO" campaign frames, but sparingly. With none of the frames used by more than 60% of the articles reviewed, this newspaper did not truly engage with these frames. In addition, this paper had more non-framed articles than *Kathimerini*. In fact, the newspaper did not have any of the "NO" campaign's frames during the five days in this referendum period. Furthermore, it's notable that this newspaper stepped away from the referendum on its front page twice, focusing instead on the effects of the capital controls in Greece rather than addressing "YES" or "NO" issues (Chrisolaura, 2015).

VII. Discussion

The ways that the newspapers *Kathimerini* and *Ta Nea* used frames to present a message regarding the "YES" and "NO" referendum campaigns showed that the papers did not always adopt the frames expected. While *Kathimerini* had a much greater affinity for the "YES" frames than its counterpoint in this study, it did not exclusively rely on them in framing its message during the research period. *Kathimerini* also had a few oddities in its stories. It's peculiar usage of the European identity frame points to the way the editors of the paper perceived it: It was considered a given until challenged. Then it was defended against those who denied it. It seems that despite the newspaper's labeling of Tsipras as a political coward afraid to take the hard decisions he was elected to, *Kathimerini* respected his conviction in the referendum. At the very least, his conviction was recognized. If there's one frame of the "YES" campaign that *Kathimerini* whole-heartedly employed in its coverage of the referendum, it was the incompetent frame, somewhat understandable given the paper's opposite political leanings to the government's. But it didn't stoop to making fun of an already weakened ideological opposite.

On the other side, *Ta Nea* held back much more in using frames to set the agenda of its news articles. While two of the frames were employed half the time, this publisher had significantly more newspapers' front-page stories without any "NO" campaign frames. In fact, in framing its message during the research period, *Ta Nea* had a considerably lower use of frames than did *Kathimerini*. Of the two papers, it was more willing to look beyond the referendum story as a most prominent front-page story, to highlight the problems that Greek society was facing because of the referendum and the capital controls that ensued. During multiple days, it went without any of the three referendum-related frames.

VII. Conclusion

By conducting a content analysis of 14 articles from each of two major Greek newspapers, the current author could discover the ways that they framed coverage of the 2015 Greek referendum. Both newspapers aligned roughly by their political leaning, with the right-leaning *Kathimerini* framing issues in the same fashion as the "YES" vote, and the left-leaning *Ta Nea* (and *To Vima*) employed the "NO" campaign's frames. *Kathimerini* employed frames to promote their agenda more often than *Ta Nea*, but in comparison, the two newspapers didn't exceedingly use any frame, apart from *Kathimerini*'s incompetence frame, which already aligned with its right-leaning anti-government agenda.

This study has some notable limitations. There was no second coder, who would have increased the validity of this study. Furthermore, the coding focused on three frames, which excluded other frames in articles if there were. Instead of many articles in the entire paper, the author selected only one article from each day. In addition, each newspaper's articles could have been coded for both "YES" and "NO" campaign frames.

Acknowledgments

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The Framing of Feminism in *Cosmopolitan* Magazine During Second-Wave Feminism

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Abstract

Helen Gurley Brown turned Cosmopolitan *magazine into a successful and profitable publication, and it was influential throughout the second-wave feminist movement. This research explored how Brown, as editor-in-chief of Cosmopolitan, framed feminism and how those messages aligned with the second-wave feminist movement using a qualitative content analysis of 24 issues of the magazine from 1966 to 1989. Findings suggest that the dialogue in Cosmopolitan fluctuated between negative and positive framing of feminist ideas and that these messages mostly did not align with the movement.*

I. Introduction

The first full-scale women's rights convention in 1848 is widely recognized as the start of American feminism appearing in waves (Kinser, 2004). At this time, in the mid-1800s, activists publicly campaigned for guardianship of their children, equal rights to education, and the right to vote (Kinser, 2004). Since women gained the right to vote in 1920, the feminist movement has continued through today.

The first wave of feminism was said to have ended in the 1920s and the second wave began in the 1960s (Kinser, 2004). The "first-wave" and "second-wave" movements helped the women in the 1960s develop new ideas while staying connected to the established ground that was created during the earlier movement (Kinser, 2004).

The prevalence of the feminist movement led it to be depicted throughout mass media. As Terkildsen and Schnell wrote (1997), the media have power over society to not only tell the public what issues to think about but also how to think about those issues. The way in which media frames a topic can impact the way the public thinks about that topic. Mass media holds this power no matter how citizens access it through television, print, radio, etc.

Cosmopolitan magazine is one of the oldest mass circulation magazines in print in America. By the 1950s, the magazine was declining in circulation and advertising revenue until Helen Gurley Brown became editor-in-chief in 1965 and revived *Cosmopolitan*, which became widely read by women (McMahon, 1990). Around this same time, second-wave feminism started to appear. With so many women reading *Cosmopolitan* during the movement, and knowing how influential the framing of issues in mass media can be on the public,

it is important to understand how *Cosmopolitan* was framing feminist ideas during this time.

This study focused on identifying how *Cosmopolitan* magazine was framing feminism during the second-wave feminist movement. Through a qualitative content analysis, this study analyzed *Cosmopolitan* articles that focused on feminist themes from 1966 to 1989. The purpose of this study is to understand how the magazine framed feminist ideas during second-wave feminism and how its dialogue fit into the movement.

II. Literature Review

The following literature review demonstrates how women's magazines and Brown's works fit into the second-wave feminist movement.

Second-wave feminism

Dorer and Hipfl (2013) defined the term feminism as a mindset that is not limited only to women or gender, but to a piece of a bigger social project that aligned with movements against racism, imperialism, homophobia, and class differences. The beginning of second-wave feminism was characterized by a perspective that was against the state-organized capitalism of the postwar period. This movement was fundamentally about protesting androcentrism (Dorer & Hipfl, 2013), which was the political culture that imagined as the model citizen an ethnic majority male worker who was the principal, if not sole, economic support for his family (Fraser, 2009). According to Fraser (2009), this was known as the "family wage" construct that was the basis for state policy for matters of employment, welfare, and development; and the feminist movement sought to challenge this male domination.

Fraser (2012) stated that the feminist movement "exposed the deep androcentrism of capitalist society;" the movement extended the bounds of justice to include matters that were previously considered private while reexamining social inequalities that had been merely tolerated, rationalized, or overlooked in the past.

In its attempt to overcome male dominance in society, the feminist movement claimed the importance of the pleasures of sex for women, but also explored the dangers of sex. Many second wave feminists celebrated discovering the pleasures and liberation of female sexuality; however, other feminists made heterosexual sex, in particular, seem incompatible with the feminist movement, and radical feminists presented lesbianism as a political choice instead of a sexually pleasurable identity. Some feminists also found it antifeminist to embrace feminine fashion and caused much of the movement to avoid the issue of fashion or consider it part of their oppression (Scanlon, 2009b).

The concept of fashion was also considered as it related to the workplace, where many feminists believed the sexualized secretary role showed what was wrong in the white-collar world. During the second-wave feminist movement, society's understanding of sexuality in the office changed, especially when the term "sexual harassment" came about in 1975 (Hunt, 2012). It was second-wave feminism that made violence against women a central concern for the first time (Scanlon, 2009b) and advocated the right for women to say no to sex (Reviere & Byerly, 2013).

Overall, the main goals of second-wave feminism, according to Busby and Leichty (1993), were to (1) open all job categories to women, (2) tie compensation to job description, not gender, (3) have "more equal division of labor within the home, (4) less emphasis on the female as an 'object' whose primary function is attracting the opposite sex, and (5) the right for each individual to develop to her full potential."

Some of these objectives were accomplished, according to Hunt (2012), who stated that the percentage of women in the workforce climbed from 34 percent in 1950, to 38 percent in 1960, and to 43 percent in 1970. The percentage of women attending college also increased from 35 percent from 1959-60 to 43 percent in 1969-70.

Women's magazines during the feminist movement

During the second-wave feminist movement, women's magazines attempted to attract and keep an audience whose ambitions and expectations were changing quickly. Articles on childrearing and homemaking, once the norm, were starting to be perceived as inadequate and condescending to women (Hunt, 2012). Print

publishing became an important form of activism that contributed to the women's liberation cause. Feminist magazines enabled women to participate in the feminist movement while discovering the feminist politics to which they most related (Forster, 2016). Feminist magazines also worked on changing the tone of women's magazines altogether. Multiple studies show how the topics and advertising present in women's magazine began to change with the growth of the feminist movement.

Based on analysis of advertising images, Busby and Leichty (1993) showed that the nontraditional magazines *Ms.* and *Working Woman* were less likely to portray women in family roles than the traditional magazines *McCall's* and *Redbook*, and were about three times more likely than the traditional magazines to portray women in employment roles. In line with these new themes in women's magazines, studies of *Ladies Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping* magazines between 1954 and 1982, showed a decline in the presentation of traditional roles for women while increasing articles with feminist themes (Reviere & Byerly, 2013). These findings align with the study from Busby and Leichty (1993) that found the number of family roles for women decreasing and the number of employment roles increasing in traditional magazines. There was also a significant decline in the number of women shown in the home and an increase in women shown outside the home in traditional magazines like *McCall's* and *Redbook* from 1959 to 1969.

Reviere and Byerly (2013) used a discourse analysis to examine columns in the magazine *Essence*. They found that *Essence* encouraged readers to define their sexual pleasure and also set limits on it as they choose. *Essence* also was definitive in encouraging women to challenge men's behavior they did not like and assured readers that they are allowed to be themselves. They emphasized that it is acceptable to be single and that women do not have to put up with men's bad behavior. These themes were in line with the thinking of the second-wave feminist movement.

Newkirk (1977) further showed how the feminist movement impacted women's magazines examining the portrayals of women's roles in the magazines *Mademoiselle*, *Redbook*, and *Ms.* from 1966-74. She found that *Ms.* presented no mother, wife, or homemaker roles from 1972-74 while *Mademoiselle* had slightly decreased domestic roles, and *Redbook* significantly decreased domestic roles. She stated that the findings showed that change was occurring in women's roles during the early 1970s and that magazines were reflecting this change.

Helen Gurley Brown

Brown is widely known as one of the founders of second-wave feminism, bringing feminist messages to a mainstream audience (Scanlon, 2009a). Brown argued that single women were able to exist on their own (Scanlon, 2009a) and could also be sexual and respectable at the same time, concepts that were contrary to previous advice (Berebitsky, 2006). Two of her key accomplishments were the turn-around of *Cosmopolitan* magazine and her first book *Sex and the Single Girl* (Scanlon, 2009a). In addition, Brown wrote the newspaper column *Women Alone* from 1963-65, gave advice on Canadian radio in 1964, and wrote a second book titled *Sex and the Office* in 1964 (Berebitsky, 2006). All her messages maintained that women should pursue professional success and sexual pleasure (Berebitsky, 2006).

Brown's first major success was with her book *Sex and the Single Girl* that advised readers to embrace single living, sex outside of marriage, and enjoy domesticity based on self-interest rather than family (Scanlon, 2009a). This outlook was popular among readers, which was shown in the sales of the book: More than two million copies were sold within the first three weeks (Ouellette, 1999). Her second book, *Sex and the Office,* focused on showing women that working was "the best of all possible worlds," even better than motherhood and domesticity (Berebitsky, 2006). Brown presented a strategy for using sexuality in the workplace to help women overcome obstacles to advance in their professions and escape gender restrictions (Berebitsky, 2006).

After writing these two books, Brown took on her next title in 1965 as top editor of *Cosmopolitan* magazine (Hunt, 2012). Brown transformed *Cosmopolitan* from a magazine that was struggling to find an audience (Hunt, 2012), and declining in circulation and advertising revenue (McMahon, 1990), to a hugely successful magazine that worked as a guide for readers who sought liberation from the outdated views of womanhood (Scanlon, 2009b).

She renovated the magazine almost overnight by putting sex front and center (Scanlon, 2009a), giving advice on sex and careers for young single and working women, and filling a gap in the magazine industry. Brown remained the editor of *Cosmopolitan* for almost 32 years and made it an incredibly profitable publication (Hunt, 2012).

During her life, Brown showed that sex sells to a female mass market with her successful books and her transformation of *Cosmopolitan* (McMahon, 1990). Brown has been credited with revolutionizing women's magazines by introducing sexuality (McMahon, 1990). She was one of the first to acknowledge that women can work outside of the home and enjoy sex outside of marriage, and carried these ideas throughout all of her works (McMahon, 1990).

Past research

Previous research on *Cosmopolitan* magazine examined how the magazine portrayed women and their sexuality in editorial content and cover images. Reviere and Byerly (2013) found that readers of *Cosmopolitan* were told to pursue their sexual needs but that the man's needs were given a higher priority. *Cosmopolitan* readers were told that they had freedom to choose partners, get what they want in the bedroom, and enjoy the pleasures of sex, but also to try harder with men by exciting them or being naughtier to solve relationship problems.

McMahon (1990) found that the largest number of articles promoted on the covers of *Cosmopolitan* were about sex and relationships with men, and *Cosmopolitan* is a "strategy manual" whose text illustrates how women's sexuality can be used to dominate and control men. A study by Maslow (2015) showed how the covers of *Cosmo* had changed over time. She indicated that the woman on the cover of *Cosmopolitan* during the 1960s would most likely be Caucasian, in her 30s with short brunette hair, brown eyes, and no visible imperfections. Over time models were dressed more sexually and the women on the covers were not necessarily the American beauty norm but were a sexualized version of it. This research showed that *Cosmopolitan* did want to liberate women; however, it was done in a more sexual way than many feminists agreed with.

For this study, three research questions were asked based on the literature review:

RQ1: How did Helen Gurley Brown, as editor-in-chief of Cosmopolitan*, discuss feminist ideas?*

RQ2: How did the dialogue in Cosmopolitan *frame feminist ideas?*

RQ3: How did the messages in Cosmopolitan *align with the second-wave feminist movement?*

III. Methods

This study analyzed the way that Brown used *Cosmopolitan* magazine to define feminism during the second-wave feminist movement. Among articles published in *Cosmopolitan* magazine during the period when Brown was the editor-in-chief (1965-1997), this study only highlighted the years of 1966-1989. 1966 is the first full year that Brown was editor-in-chief, and 1989 is when the second-wave feminist movement came to a close (Kinser, 2004; Mack-Canty, 2004).

To test the framing of feminist ideas in *Cosmopolitan* magazine during second-wave feminism, the researcher made a composite-year sample of all issues that were published during the timeframe. The issues studied were February 1966, March 1967, April 1968, May 1969 etc. until January 1989. In total, this study looked at 24 issues of *Cosmopolitan* magazine over a 24-year time span.

Articles from the 24 issues were selected when they contained three main feminist topics of sex/dating, working, and motherhood/marriage. The researcher went through the table of contents of each selected issue and analyzed the articles that mentioned these three categories. The editor's letter of each issue was also analyzed to see Brown's voice within the magazine.

A qualitative content analysis was employed to analyze the articles and the editor's letters. The author tried to identify the major themes through this analysis, in particular, whether these conversations aligned with the goals of the second-wave feminist movement.

She examined whether each article framed its topic positively, negatively, or neutrally; then compared its findings with the way the second-wave feminist movement framed the same topic. This study also focused on the way the discussion of these themes changed throughout each decade of the second-wave feminist movement throughout 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

IV. Findings

The following findings were categorized first by the three feminist themes studied (sex/dating, motherhood/marriage, and work) to show how the discussion of these topics changed throughout the decades that comprised the second-wave feminist movement (1960s, 1970s, 1980s). Then the findings from the analysis of the editor's letter of each issue were presented.

Sex/Dating

This study analyzed 10 articles on sex/dating from four selected issues in the sixties. These articles broadly covered how to get a man, how to keep a man, when to date a man, and how to get over a man. Advice for getting a man all mentioned doing things to improve a woman's looks or gain attention, such as getting a motorcycle because it seems "vital and alive" and will make men at least stop to whistle. A woman could also "be slow about learning" how to drive it if the man teaching her is attractive. Other advice included fixing up one's appearance by getting a haircut, makeup consultation, losing weight, switching jobs to meet eligible men, look fantastic at all times even when going to the mailbox, and diet, but do not talk about dieting. Advice for keeping a man included not confusing him with fashion choices. For example, "don't flip him as a gamine and then startle him at the wrong time as a sultry siren." It also mentioned to "think helpless whenever you're with a man" and wear clothes that "help convey femininity and helplessness." Advice on when to date a man included knowing what he earns so a woman will know "how much you can expect to live on" and because a man's "earning potential is part of his whole package, just like what kind of mother and hostess you'll make is part of yours." It was also noted to know when a man is "remarriageable" because their reactions to a woman as a future wife "will be determined not only by [her] charms but largely by the experiences they had as husbands."

There were 16 articles on this topic from 10 in the seventies. They covered casual sex, affairs, office romance, keeping a man around, and how money affects the relationship. Some advice on how to keep a man included "never stop telling him how attractive he is," "never mention your backache or your headache after 7:30 p.m.," "learn to make a bed with him in it," "rearrange the lighting to flatter you," "learn his favorite sport," "bake fresh bread," "launder his shirts," and "move closer to where he lives." Most of the advice focused on boosting a man's ego and doing typically feminine activities—cooking and cleaning—to keep a man.

On the topic of money and relationships, the articles suggested that being a woman who makes more money in a relationship can lead to problems. One article mentioned that being a woman that financially supported a man can lead to many anxieties and stresses because the customary roles of "woman as dependent and men as wage earner are reversed." However, the article also mentioned that "surprising" problems could emerge if the man is the affluent one in a relationship.

Office romance was discussed in only one of the articles: "Office sex is sometimes booby-trapped with tears … But the working world is where the men are!" The article regarded office sex as positive and a good source of love and adventure. It even said, "If your company forbids intraoffice dating, it's the wrong office for you."

The subject of adultery, which was mentioned throughout the issues, was regarded both positively and negatively. One article, which was about a woman having an affair with her best friend's husband, was regarded as a negative experience. Another article mentioned how "society is amused and tolerant with the wayward husband. But the persisting double standard is not quite so permissive with the unfaithful wife." However, this article did not advise against adultery, but to use discretion and lie if caught. One article even mentioned that there is no reason not to try to get a married man to leave his wife since the divorce rate is increasing.

Regarding casual sex, it was discussed as something that was becoming more prevalent. One article wrote, "Women have always had flings, just as we've always been involved in one-nighters. But the sexual freedom of the 1970s has made it possible for us to have more of them than ever before and to discuss them more openly." It was also said that women are more often taking the initiative when it comes to seduction. However, it was also discussed that women are not able to have "sufficient distance" from emotions and often still "go to bed with a man hoping the affair will lead to permanency."

Fourteen articles in 10 issues dealt with sex/dating in the eighties. They covered seducing a man, office sex, whom to date, and sexually experienced women. Advice on seducing a man included good lighting, dressing well, cooking for him, giving him a massage, being friendly, not being shy and being graceful. On the topic of office sex, an article said, "Today's women find that the office is a perfect place to seek romance." The article stressed the importance of discretion about office sex, especially if the man is your boss, but overall promoted at office sex positively.

Regarding whom to date, articles said that traditionally women dated men who were better educated and earned more money than them; however, now that women have begun to earn good money and get more education they have limited the number of "traditionally suitable men." Arguing that the media said that "singlehood is a bad thing and that women should quit their foolish efforts to make husbands and corporations more egalitarian," the writer of one article gave opposite advice. When asked what it is worth to have any husband, the author wrote "Perhaps they will decide that a bad marriage is better than none, but I hope not." Another article discussed dating single fathers saying that it can come with many complications, but "if you're looking for a man who can give you a family while taking much of the responsibility for it himself then a single father may be for you."

On the topic of sexually experienced women, it said that while it is okay to go to bed with many men, a woman should not "brag or cry" about her exploits. It said that while men want women who know what they are doing in bed, men do not want a woman to talk about her previous sexual experiences because it could make him feel insecure. It also indicated that while more women are having casual sex, they are not able to keep a certain distance or be detached the way that men can. With a more progressive tone, one article said that "sex isn't a competition and so long as a woman feels comfortable with the frequency of her relations, she is perfectly normal."

Motherhood/Marriage

Only one article out of the four issues in the sixties pertained to the "marriage/motherhood" category. The article, titled "An Unmarried Girl Can Keep Her Baby," suggested that while an increasing number of white middle-class unwed girls have decided to keep their children, it is grounds for ostracism and many have emotional problems due to no marital status.

Five of the articles from the 10 issues studied during the seventies were related to marriage or motherhood. These articles mentioned topics related to keeping your marriage together, getting a divorce, having a child, and marrying again. Advice about keeping your marriage together included communicating on both sides, understanding your husband's desires, and using "shock tactics to gain his attention." The advice ranged from saying that both parties must put forth an effort to advice indicating that the wife should be making an effort in the relationship. Having a child was mostly regarded in negative terms because it leads to obsession, fatigue, loss of sensuality, loss of privacy, economic pressures, illness, loss of spontaneity, and causes many couples to divorce. It was also mentioned that many couples were starting to choose not to have children.

About divorce, it was said that it had become a fact of life, so no longer a scandal, but an exercise of rights. Articles said that only a bad divorce should be considered a failure, and gave advice on how to have a good divorce that included therapy, not focusing on revenge, "beware of going to bed with your estranged husband, be doubly careful not to go to bed with your lawyer," and not to speak badly of your soon to be ex-husband to your children. Remarrying was not regarded as the best option for divorced women. They said that a growing number of women were choosing not immediately to pursue a new husband, and they "are neither man-haters nor lesbians nor losers nor unattractive." Not remarrying was beginning to become a viable and maybe even preferable option and advised women to enjoy the freedom because the "single woman of the seventies has more sensational options at her fingertips than women have ever had before."

Twelve articles from the 10 issues in the eighties discussed marriage or motherhood. They covered making a marriage work, when or if you should have children, waiting to marry and how to get a husband. Advice on making your marriage work was more progressive during the eighties. Advice included both people giving, supporting each other, knowing how to communicate, and being playful.

Regarding motherhood, the articles talked about how more women are choosing to wait longer before having children or not having children at all. One article said, "Motherhood is no longer regarded as a woman's primary role in life, or her only route to fulfillment." Articles also included information regarding a positive outlook on waiting longer to marry. They said that more women were postponing marriage to pursue

their careers or just to have a good time. They mentioned that it is harder to find a husband after thirty; however, those that marry later are "happier, less likely to divorce, more satisfied with their lives in general and fairly unanimous in their view that waiting is the better choice."

Only one article in the eighties gave advice on how to gain a husband. That advice included trying to fulfill his deepest desires and wildest wishes, being passionate, being creative and being his dream girl. On being his dream girl, the article said to "adapt yes but don't twist yourself totally out of shape" and "don't become your worst nightmare."

Work

Four articles from the four issues in the sixties fell into the "work" category. These articles all touched on different topics regarding the "career girl." They covered dressing for work, "nonboring" jobs, job hunting for "the negro girl" and drinking for the career girl. These articles focused on different topics, but they all mentioned men. They mentioned that a boss could come back to the office "slightly shellacked" and be endearing; however, if the boss is a woman it is no longer endearing at all. The article about job hunting for the "negro girl" mentioned dating white men. On the topic of "nonboring" jobs, it stated that it is hard to meet a decent man in New York. When discussing how career girls should dress, it mentioned that fashion is pointless if you are not thin and that one should not be a "sexpot" or "overdone:" and she should play a different role at the office than when she is "at home with the man in her life."

Only two articles were directly related to women working of the 10 issues analyzed from the seventies: "Four Right Jobs for Four Bright Girls" and "How I Chose my Career." Neither of these articles gave the writers' opinion on women working. Both were only filled with quotes from successful people in different fields talking about what their careers are and how they got there.

Five articles out of the 10 issues from the eighties were related to women in the workforce. They discussed moonlighting, high paying careers, succeeding on the job, and where to start. On moonlighting, they said that "if a lucrative career change or pay boost" is not in the near future, you should consider moonlighting as an option and then gave many examples of jobs that you could take. Another article gave a list of 10 high paying careers for women to consider if they wanted to "rise to the top where the cream is."

For succeeding in your career, an article discussed not acting the way women are often expected to act, i.e., emotionally. Some other advice included relying on others, being confident, and taking action. Another article spoke about how the secretarial job is still a good place to start if you work for the right boss because it could lead to something bigger faster than other entry-level jobs.

Editor's Letters

The editor's letters from the four issues analyzed in the sixties did not contain much of Brown's voice. But when they did, her voice spoke about men. In March 1966, she mentioned that she decided to devote the entire issue to the subject of men and also mentioned how the reader should keep an open mind while most think that men are supposed to collect women. In the other issues, she had even less of her voice; however, some mentioned attractive football players, and others mentioned that women think many people would like adultery for themselves, but they just do not want their mate messing around.

The editor's letters from the 10 issues in the seventies contained more of Brown's voice, especially a June 1970 article. In the letter, she spoke a lot about the women's liberation movement. She stated that she thought that it was wonderful, though she did not come to that perspective until late in the day. She spoke about how it is okay that some women do not want the system changed, but that those that do are just looking for options "hopefully with the full encouragement and cooperation of our men." However, she then strayed from agreeing with the women's liberation movement when she spoke about the girl that *Cosmopolitan* is intended for. She stated that "the girl this magazine is edited for loves men … doesn't feel alive unless she's in love and giving to a man … and because there's a shortage … she works, yes works, at being a living doll." She then mentioned that this is where she parts from the women's liberation movement because "cosmo girls" please men because they adore them and love to sleep with them. Brown spoke more about who the "cosmo girl" is in an issue in October 1974. She stated that a "cosmo girl" is sexy and pretty; however, she does not rely on those attributes to get through life.

In the January 1977 issue, Brown wrote how she has "always rather relished being treated as a sex object" because there is something worse about not being treated as a sex object. However, she then stated

that she understands woman who complain that they are only valued for their sexual selves when the rest of them is ignored.

In the 10 issues analyzed from the eighties, Brown wrote mostly about her travels with her husband in her editor's letters. In May 1981, she spoke about how she and her husband went to his alma mater and spoke with current students. She stated that some students spoke about how they were disturbed by the covers of *Cosmopolitan* and how they depicted women. In response to this, Brown said: "But they can … or come quite close if they apply as much makeup and have the hair styling our models do, et cetera, et cetera."

In another issue, she mentioned how she got irritated at the statistics that suggest that college-educated women would not be able to marry if they waited until thirty and said she did not believe it. She then mentioned how she did not marry until she was 37 and that "if you really want one (and you may not!), he's out there."

V. Discussion

To understand how Brown framed feminist ideas in *Cosmopolitan* magazine and how her dialogue fit into the second-wave feminist movement, this study presented three research questions.

Regarding RQ1, "How did Brown, as editor-in-chief of *Cosmopolitan*, discuss feminist ideas?," this study examined Brown's editor's letters and found that her dialogue fluctuated between positively and negatively regarding feminist ideas. She positively framed feminist ideas when she spoke about the benefits of the women's liberation movement and led to people questioning the norm, thereby giving women more options in life. She also mentioned how it is okay to not want a husband and to stay single. These messages were expected from Brown since her first book *Sex and the Single Girl* encouraged readers to embrace single living (Scanlon, 2009a).

However, Brown parted from this positive feminist dialogue when she talked about differing from the Women's Liberation Movement because *Cosmopolitan* is edited for a woman who cannot feel alive without being in love and giving to a man. She mentioned that "cosmo girls" work at being a living doll, are sexy, pretty, and could look like the women on the covers of the magazine by putting in the effort through makeup and hairstyling. Some of these messages were surprising to see from Brown. She was someone who had been known for promoting that single women can exist on their own and should embrace being single; however, she contradicted this message by explaining how a "cosmo girl's" main purpose in life is pleasing men.

Regarding RQ2, "How did the dialogue in *Cosmopolitan* frame feminist ideas?," this study examined articles that directly related to the categories of motherhood or marriage, sex or dating, and women in the workforce. The author found that dialogue concerning marriage or motherhood was framed more positively over time. In the sixties, very little of the dialogue reflected motherhood or marriage, except for one article that framed it negatively, pointing out the problems that unmarried women with children would face in society.

In the seventies, having a child was still discussed negatively, while marriage was not specifically referred to as negative, divorce and choosing not to remarry were framed positively. It was said that divorce could be good and that remarriage does not have to be the only option because single women in the seventies have more options than ever before. When directly discussing the topic of marriage, the article was neutral, only discussing ways to help a marriage.

By the eighties, motherhood was framed more neutrally, discussing how more women are choosing to wait to have children and some choose not to; however, the choice of when to have children is ultimately personal. Marriage was discussed more positively mentioning that women who choose to marry in their thirties are happier and more satisfied, and gave advice on getting a husband, implying that there is something positive about procuring one. It was not surprising to see that the category of motherhood and marriage was not framed entirely positive because Brown was known for encouraging single living and she also believed that there are fulfilling life choices that can be better than motherhood and domesticity (Berebitsky, 2006).

The study found that the framing of discussions about sex or dating fluctuated between being positive and negative throughout the decades studied. In the sixties, sex and dating were regarded in a neutral tone. The articles focused solely on giving advice without regarding any of the experiences as positive or negative.

In the seventies and the eighties, topics about sex and dating had positive and negative treatments as well as neutral ones. Negative framing focused on problems money creates in relationships, being the unfaithful wife, casual sex, and talking about previous sexual experiences with men. Positive framing focused on office sex, being sexually experienced, and getting a married man to leave his wife. It was unexpected that casual sex would be framed negatively considering Brown was known to advise readers to embrace sex outside of marriage (Scanlon, 2009a) and *Cosmopolitan* has been known to acknowledge that women can enjoy the pleasures of sex (Reviere & Byerly, 2013). It was understandable, however, that framing fluctuated from positive to negative in this category because readers of *Cosmopolitan* have been told to pursue their sexual needs; however, the man's needs are given a higher priority (Reviere & Byerly, 2013). This indicates that *Cosmopolitan* would frame sex and dating positively until topics of men's needs were brought up in comparison. This explains why some topics were framed negatively: women having more money than their man; a wife being unfaithful; and women telling their man about their previous sexual experiences. All of these topics discuss women acting in a way that would put their needs over their man's, which is why they were framed negatively, to reinforce that while women can enjoy sex and dating, they cannot do so at the expense of men.

The study found that women in the workforce were framed neutrally throughout the decades studied. Each decade included articles that only outlined different job descriptions of women who work. They also all gave advice neutrally about how to succeed in a job, including not drinking too much, dressing well, and not being emotional. It was surprising that this category was not framed positively or negatively. Brown, in her second book *Sex and the Office*, focused on showing women that working was "the best of all possible worlds" (Berebitsky, 2006) and she was also one of the first to acknowledge that women can work outside of the home (McMahon, 1990). This indicates that *Cosmopolitan* under Brown's editorial guidance would have framed women in the workforce positively rather than neutrally.

Regarding RQ3, "How did the messages in *Cosmopolitan* align with the second-wave feminist movement?," this study found that most messages did not align with the second-wave feminist movement. One goal of the second-wave feminist movement was to have more equal division of labor within the home, and many feminists wanted to see fewer women in traditional roles of a mother or wife. Multiple studies on magazines during this time showed a decline in women presented in family roles (Busby & Leichty, 1993; Newkirk, 1977). However, this study showed that *Cosmopolitan* continually increased the number of articles about motherhood and marriage from 1966 to 1989, from only one article in the 1960s to 12 articles in the 1980s. *Cosmopolitan* also framed this category more positively over this time. This varies from what other publications were doing at this time and also indicates that *Cosmopolitan* did not agree with the second-wave feminist movement on this topic, believing that women should still very much be in motherhood and wife roles. However, throughout these articles *Cosmopolitan* advocated that being in these roles had become more of a choice than a duty for women by stating, "Motherhood is no longer regarded as a woman's primary role in life, or her only route to fulfillment," and discussing divorce as an exercise of rights because women have the right to be happy, and singlehood is a new choice for women.

The number of articles in *Cosmopolitan* that depicted women in careers varied throughout the time, starting with four in the 1960s, down to two in the 1970s, and up to five in the 1980s. This category continued to represent a minority of the topics in the magazine throughout the second-wave feminist movement. One of the major goals of the second-wave feminist movement was to open all job categories to women, and other magazines aligned with this objective by showing an increase of women presented in employment roles (Busby & Leichty, 1993). *Cosmopolitan* did not reflect the second-wave feminist movement in this category and continually increased the amount of articles that reflected women in employment roles. Decreasing in the 1970s when presenting this category, the magazine framed the topic neutrally instead of overtly positive. However, in the articles that did depict women in employment roles, *Cosmopolitan* gave its readers advice on succeeding in the workplace as well as giving them many examples of possible career paths to consider.

The number of articles that discussed sex or dating continued to represent the majority of the topics in *Cosmopolitan* throughout the period. This was expected since putting sex at the forefront was how Brown reinvigorated the magazine (Hunt, 2012). However, making sex the selling point of the magazine went against the philosophy of the second-wave feminist movement. While the movement asserted the importance of the pleasures of sex for women (Scanlon, 2009b), a major goal for second-wave feminists was to put less emphasis on the female whose primary function is to attract the opposite sex (Busby & Leichty, 1993). Further, Brown stated that the woman that *Cosmopolitan* is intended for only feels alive if she is pleasing a man. This indicates *Cosmopolitan* strayed from the intentions of the second-wave feminist movement.

VI. Conclusion

This study examined how Brown discussed feminist ideas within *Cosmopolitan* and how those messages aligned with the second-wave feminist movement. It found that Brown fluctuated in framing feminist ideas as both positive and negative and that her messages in *Cosmopolitan* mostly did not align with the movement. Previous research on other publications during second-wave feminism showed that the feminist movement impacted women's magazines, as these publications attempted to maintain this audience whose expectations were changing (Hunt, 2012; Newkirk, 1977). *Cosmopolitan*, however, did not follow this trend, and did not align its messages to meet the second-wave feminist movement. Considering the success and popularity of *Cosmopolitan* during this time period, this could suggest that many women wanted to read a publication that did not necessarily align with second-wave feminism.

This analysis was limited in terms of time, which forced the author to limit the number of issues and articles that could be examined. This study used a composite-year sample, thereby only looking at one issue per year from 1966 to 1989. This study also focused only on text in the articles, so future research may include image analysis as well.

Acknowledgments

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An Investigation of Print Media's Portrayal of the Opioid Epidemic

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Abstract

The United States has witnessed a massive rise in opioid-related overdoses and users seeking treatment. Media narratives surrounding drug-related issues have historically set a precedent for how the issues are addressed and handled publicly. Through content analysis, this study found that print media framed opioid addiction as a public health issue and associated it much less with crime than typical drug-related coverage. This study also examined how favorable the public policy response was to opioid cases in comparison with the crack epidemics in the late 1980s. This is partly because white, rural communities are most heavily affected, and pharmaceutical companies played a significant role in the rise of addicts.

I. Introduction

Over the last 40 years, the United States has witnessed a multitude of drug-related societal issues that have consumed politics, education, and the media. Since 2001, the U.S. has experienced a rise in a new form of drug abuse: opioid addiction. According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine, opioids "are a class of drugs that include the illicit drug heroin as well as the illicit prescription pain relievers oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, morphine, fentanyl and others" (American Society of Addiction Medicine, 2016). Addiction to opioids typically stems from habit-forming opioid prescription drugs, where addicts later tend to switch to cheaper drugs like heroin or fentanyl. Opioid-related drug overdoses have doubled between 2000 and 2014 (Meldrum, 2016). In 2015, the Center for Disease Control reported that 78 people die every day from opioid overdoses in the United States, which has almost quadrupled since 1999 (Seelye, 2016).

In times of new public health issues, citizens historically have turned to the media to educate themselves and fully understand the complex issues facing society. When the media either knowingly or unknowingly disseminates false information or harmful stereotypes about drug-related issues, the public's perception and public policy response are then skewed. "For much of the population, it is the news media that serve as the central link between problems and perceptions. Thus, there is a linkage from the problem to the scholarly understanding of that problem, to the dissemination and impressions among the general population, and finally to the development of public policy responses" (Golub & Hartman, 1999, p. 423).

This troubling pattern was seen widely throughout print media coverage of the Crack Scare, the sharp rise in crack use in 1986. During July, August, and September 1986, drug-related coverage made up 5% of

all national media (Orcutt & Turner, 1993). While only 3% of Americans believed drug abuse was America's most important problem, that number grew considerably to 64% by 1989 (Golub & Hartman, 1999). The media narrative surrounding the rise in crack typically explained it as a "violence inducing, highly addictive drug that created a plague of social problems, especially in inner city communities" (Coyle, 2002). The false stigmas perpetuated in the media resulted in harsh sentencing laws for crack users, with African American men most often arrested. The long-standing effects of the Crack Scare are still evident within society today, and countless studies have attributed heightened media coverage and the dissemination of hyperbolized information to the intense public response and harsh legislative reactions (Golub & Hartman, 1999).

In print media coverage around opioid addiction, the media narrative is entirely different. While crack was portrayed as an African-American drug, opioid addiction has been painted as a middle-class, white American public health concern, rather than a criminal justice issue. It is crucial to examine print media's tendency to stereotype and hyperbolize drug-related information and how that affects societal understanding and awareness (Hansen & Netherland, 2016). This paper examined how print media has framed the opioid epidemic through analyzing the different themes, topics, and narratives found throughout its coverage.

II. Literature Review

To fully understand the importance of drug-related media coverage and both its past and current racial implications, it is important to review past research and other related findings. Research has found that there has been a historical pattern of racial stereotyping in drug-related coverage, which affects the framing and tone of the media coverage (Beckett et al., 2005). This leads to the social construction of drug epidemics and can cause intense media frenzies, like during the crack epidemic and now during the rise in opioid addiction and overdoses. In current-day media framing of the opioid crisis, there are noticeable and stark contrasts from the way the rise in the crack was explained to America by print media. The following research helps outline that and provides context for the findings of this paper.

Print Media Portrayal of Drug Addiction

When the U.S. saw a massive rise in crack use and addiction between 1984 and 1990, print media consistently reported the issue (Hartley & Miller, 2010). While intentions were to educate readers about a drug crisis invisible to many, the coverage displayed a substantial pattern of racial stereotypes and "media myths" that both perpetuated false stigmas and heightened public fear. A 2008 study found that the media has adopted a stance against "problematic" drug use that associates drug addiction and drug users as dangerous and likely to commit further crime (Stuart, 2008). The study also found that instead of discussing the fundamental issues surrounding a rise in drug use, media tended to simplify complex issues, which further ostracized crack users from society and promoted their status as inner-city criminals (Stuart, 2008). These media practices not only promote wrongful stigmas against drug addiction, they also tend to simplify the demographics reached by certain drugs and the massive societal implications that come from heightened fear surrounding public safety.

During the rise of the crack crisis, journalists experienced increased pressure to report on the issue and explain the rise in context. This often led to hyperbolic and manipulated data imagery used in print media to inflate and dramatize the situation at hand. An analysis of drug-related print coverage in 1986 examined how print media used numerical data and statistics to dramatize the situation (Orcutt & Turner, 1993). Multiple situational examples, including a content analysis in *Newsweek's* "Coke Plague" story, found that journalists were "stretching the 'true' numbers in the . . . report considerably" (Orcutt & Turner, 1993, p. 203). One of the major explanatory reasons found by the researchers was the intense pressure placed upon the media to report breaking and newsworthy stories; data manipulation and hyperbole were a strategy used to heighten interest in the topic and sell more copies (Orcutt & Turner, 1993).

Print Media's Construction of the Crack and Opioid Epidemics

During the first few years of the rise in crack use in the mid-1980s, the substantial spike in usage became a point of fixation for print media. However, the way print media narrated the issue began to influence and shape public perceptions (Himmelstein, 2013). One study analyzed which result print media chose

to print from the 1985 *Monitoring the Future* national survey. The research found that print media were specifically choosing data over long time periods to dramatize the actual drug crisis (Himmelstein, 2013). The research also found that media were hesitant to report on positive new trends and used language to minimize progress. For example, a report examined by the researchers that follow this trend wrote: "Although overall drug usage among young people continued a trend of gradual decline last year, the United States still has the highest rates among the world's industrialized nations" (Himmelstein, 2013).

The societal effects of pinning a certain stereotype on addicts can be crucial depending on their respective drug addition. In 2016, research in the *Journal of Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* found troubling facts about print media's portrayal of opioid addicts (Hansen & Netherland, 2016). After conducting a content analysis that tracked the media narrative surrounding recent opioid use, researchers found that "media portrayals of race and opioids points to the critical role of racialized imagery and narratives in general public support for disparate policy responses in drug control" (Hansen & Netherland, 2016). The research also examined the concept of dehumanization in drug-related media coverage; articles about African-American addicts typically omit any backstories of family and home life, and instead, simply deal with the facts, while articles about white drug users often describe their communities and provide context (Hansen & Netherland, 2016).

Common Print Media Myths Regarding Drug Addiction

In a time of intense media scrutiny and pressure upon journalists to deliver hard-hitting news coverage, a steady stream of misinformation and media myths took up a substantial amount of reporting efforts during the rise in crack use between 1984 and 1990. While the factuality of these myths has long ago been debunked, a 2014 research study of crack-related media coverage found that a common media trend to heighten the intensity of drug coverage was to set crack apart from other drugs (Levine & Reinarman, 2014). One of the most effective and widely used strategies was to say crack was an entirely different drug than cocaine (Levine & Reinarman, 2014). The media, while informing audiences that crack was instantly addictive, began using words like "epidemic" and "plague" to describe the increased use (Levine & Reinarman, 2014).

A content analysis of *The New York Times*, *Time*, and *Newsweek* articles covering crack use between 1985 and 1995 uncovered a concerning pattern of myths perpetuated in print media and the disappointing lack of correction after research deemed the myths false (Golub & Hartman, 1999). The study found that in 1986, 66% of *The New York Times* articles about crack perpetuated at least one myth (Golub & Hartman, 1999). In 1995, this number had only decreased to 30%. One study also found that almost all crack use reports were based on urban users, even though this didn't represent the national drug use overall (Golub & Hartman, 1999). The article explains the top three crack-user myths perpetuated by the media: crack is the most dangerous drug; it leads users to violent behavior; and crack dealers are very wealthy (Golub & Hartman, 1999). This study measured the volume of crack-related articles between 1985 and 1995 and how the rise was communicated to the public.

The current author analyzed opioid-related drug coverage throughout 2016 in both national and local print media to investigate how the opioid crisis has been framed and whether harmful drug-related stereotypes have been perpetuated. The author specifically asked one research question: What kind of information, statistics, and imagery did print news media use to narrate and frame the rise in opioid addiction?

III. Methods

A content analysis was performed to investigate how opioid abuse has been depicted by the media. Both national and local media were examined to better understand how the issue was explained at both the big-picture and local levels. A content analysis uses a systematic approach to reading text that allows the researcher "to yield inferences from all kinds of verbal, pictorial, symbolic, and communication data" (Krippendorff, 2004). When print media began growing in popularity at the start of the 20th century, quantitative newspaper analysis grew in popularity to analyze the standard of information being released to the public (Krippendorff, 2004). Because of the media's influence on the public, "an attempt to determine with quantitative exactness the degrees of influence exerted by different types of newspaper material on different sections of the public would appear to be justified by the possible services rendered both to propagandists

and (if there is a difference) to those interested in political education" (Woodward, 1934, p. 526). Quantitative newspaper analysis has served an important role in promoting journalistic integrity and ensuring that the public is receiving the best information as possible (Woodward, 1934).

This study analyzed the content of all articles containing the word "opioid" from *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal*, and the *New Hampshire Union Leader* published between November 1, 2016, and December 31, 2016. Each article was coded for four main categories: general information, characteristics of user/users, response to opioid-related issue, and perpetuation of stereotypes. The quantitative analysis allows for the identification of common practices, stereotypes, and topics discussed in the overall media opioid abuse narrative.

The *New Hampshire Union Leader*, the highest circulated newspaper in New Hampshire, was chosen to obtain insight into the local-level framing of opioid abuse in a state that has seen one of the highest jumps in 2016 opioid abuse and overdoses. The full coding sheet can be found in the Appendix.

IV. Findings

The selected sample included 55 articles from *The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times*, and the *Union Leader*. Among the articles, news stories accounted for 67%, while news analyses for 20% and feature stories for 13%. The news stories were typically centered on new legislation, new research, and medical findings, or criminal activity, while the news analysis and feature stories tended to focus on particular addicts and the far-reaching complications of opioid addiction. The *Union Leader* articles were primarily news stories (88%) and were shorter in length, which is not surprising given it is a local media source. While *The New York Times* had the fewest total number of articles that were the longest on average (Refer to Table 1).

Table 1. Different Coverage by Three Newspapers of Drugs

Publication	Total # of Articles	Average Word Count	Article Type
The Wall Street Journal	19	965	News Story: 7 News Analysis: 7 Feature Story: 5
The New York Times	12	1090	News Story: 9 News Analysis: 1 Feature Story: 2
Union Leader	24	618	News Story: 21 News Analysis: 3 Feature Story: 0
Total	55	891	News Story: 37 News Analysis: 11 Feature Story: 7

The opioids mentioned throughout the article noticeably mentioned heroin and fentanyl at a much higher frequency than any other frequently abused opioid. In fact, 46% of all articles specifically mentioned heroin and 37% mentioned fentanyl. It is interesting that heroin is the cheapest and only street-level drug in the following table.

Table 2. Coverage by Newspapers of Different Types of Drugs

Publication	Oxycontin	Hydrocodone	Oxycodone	Heroin	Fentanyl	Total
The Wall Street Journal	2	0	5	14	10	31
The New York Times	0	2	2	6	5	15
Union Leader	0	0	0	11	10	21
Total	2	2	7	31	25	67
Total (%)	3	3	10	46	37	100

As opioid overdose rates rise in the United States, medical personnel must combat the drug potency and find certain opioid antidotes that will allow for the patient's breathing to normalize, which can be used at the scene of the overdose and have a significant impact on opioid overdose reversal (Brown, 2017). Naloxene has grown to be one of the most widely used and effective antidotes; however, it was only mentioned in 7 (10%) articles. Methadone and Buprenorphine, two opioids used to treat addiction were mentioned in 7 (10%) and 5 (7%) articles, respectively.

User Demographics

A total of 21 total opioid addicts referenced in the sample: 14 (67%) were men and 7 (33%) were women. The average age of men was much higher than the women: 32 for men and 24 for women. Of the 14 articles that mentioned the location of opioid use, 79% were in rural settings. Twenty-two percent of articles mentioned criminal action taken specifically against an opioid addict, and 36% depicted illegal drug activity involving street-level drugs.

Of the seven women referenced, five were pregnant or had given birth while addicted to opioids. The pregnancy narrative was a clear theme within the opioid coverage of women and detailed the harsh realities of birthing a child who is opioid-dependent and having to withstand withdrawal symptoms. When speaking about specific female users, only mothers in rural areas were included, a clear emphasis on the fact that this is affecting rural areas at a higher rate. While highlighting one region of New York, a *Wall Street Journal* article stated that "A new study found births of infants exposed in the womb to heroin and other addictive opioids grew more than sixfold in rural communities between 2004 and 2013, versus more than threefold in urban areas." While these rates are astonishing, almost any narrative surrounding female opioid users centered around pregnancy and childbirth.

The View from Washington

As pressure increases on legislators to ramp up treatment efforts for opioid addicts, media not only report on government progress, but also draw conclusions on the best ways to handle the massive rise in opioid abuse and emphasize policy areas that the epidemic is affecting, ultimately framing the issue for readers. Of all articles in the sample, 31% mentioned either certain politicians who were working to improve opioid abuse or legislation, current or potential. Of all articles, 25% mentioned healthcare policy in relation to addiction; however, only two articles mentioned the massive rise in hospital costs that the opioid epidemic has created.

Hyperbolized Language

As discussed in the literature review, the language and types of information used in drug-related articles affect the way the issue is framed in terms of severity. A common theme throughout all three publications was the use of hyperbole to dramatize the situation at hand. This practice is misleading and has the potential to negatively impact policy reform, as was seen in the crack epidemic (Hartley & Miller, 2010). For example, a *New York Times* article quoted a D.E.A. agent speaking about fentanyl stating, "It's

essentially the serial killer of drugs. It's not something you can use for any kind of duration and survive." While Fentanyl is an incredibly potent and dangerous drug, there are thousands of Americans living with fentanyl addiction who have lived with it for long durations. Another example comes from a *Wall Street Journal* article that stated, "The average opioid abuser is not a pain patient. He or she is a non-patient who pilfers the medication from unsuspecting relatives, buys it on the gray market, or finds a so-called candy man." Not only is this factually incorrect, but it perpetuates incredibly harmful stereotypes in a medium incredibly influential to society. The use of hyperbole along with the spread of negative stereotypes was primarily evident in the national publications, while the *Union Leader* seemed to be making a cognitive effort to inform the public and provide realistic and relevant statistics and quotes.

Villainizing Big Pharma

The role that the pharmaceutical industry plays in opioid abuse is one of the most crucial areas of the epidemic. Many are seeking to hold pharmaceutical companies responsible due to their role in motivating the massive rise in opioid prescriptions (Meldrum, 2016). A third of all articles in the content analysis mentioned misconduct on the part of pharmaceutical companies and a clear focus on blame that was directed toward the industry. A *Wall Street Journal* article quoted an addiction doctor stating, "'Part of the blame for the epidemic,' Dr. Lembke says, 'rests with the pharmaceutical companies, which have been heavy-handed in their promotion of narcotics to doctors. Meanwhile, she argues, Big Pharma has exaggerated the number of Americans with chronic pain, inflating the figure to 100 million when 25 million would be more realistic.'"

A Call for Treatment over Justice

One of the most common themes among the articles was the importance of treatment options for addicts over criminal consequences. Of all articles, 42% emphasized treatment and recovery as the best option for combatting the opioid epidemic, compared to 9% that argued for criminal justice responses. For example, New Hampshire began a supervised drug court program that allowed opioid addicts facing jail time to receive treatment options and a job contract instead. Public safety was consistently cited as the top concern for law enforcement and public officials, and increased jail time was never mentioned. A common reason used to advocate for treatment was financial benefits, as one *Wall Street Journal* article did. It cited a Surgeon General's report saying, "Every one dollar invested in brief primary care intervention saves more than $27. A dollar spent by intervening at a hospital saves over $36, or $9 in an emergency department."

The major juxtaposition of this public health response toward opioid addiction vs. the crack epidemic was mentioned once in a *Wall Street Journal* article, which discussed the replacement of jail time with treatment options for addictions. It wrote: "Similar programs have also drawn criticism from some African-American leaders, who believe public officials now frame the opioid epidemic as a public health crisis— rather than a criminal issue— because most opioid abusers are white."

V. Conclusions

Opioid abuse and addiction is a complicated and severe epidemic that crosses gender, racial, and class lines. This content analysis investigated the kind of information, statistics, and imagery journalists are using to narrate and frame the rise in opioid addiction in print media. Historically, print media has followed a pattern of over-inflating drug-related societal issues and perpetuating stereotypes about certain drugs and addicts (Hartley & Miller, 2010). The opioid crisis has been a unique drug-related issue because the population of addicts is 90% white and 75% from rural areas (Cicero, Ellis, & Surratt, 2014). Additionally, 75% of users become addicted to opioids by taking prescription drugs (Cicero et al., 2014). As a result, people responded to this problem as a public health issue instead of a criminal justice problem (Hansen, 2016). This content analysis found that almost half of all articles specifically mentioned treatment and recovery options as the best way to combat opioid addiction. Only five articles of the entire sample cited arrests or legal punishment as a productive way to help addicts. This is a sharp contrast to the crack epidemic response, which was increased law enforcement and drug sentencing (Coyle, 2002).

The gender and age of the users were misrepresented. While only 33% of users mentioned were women in the sample, a JAMA psychiatry report revealed there are now almost equal numbers of women

seeking heroin treatment as men (Cicero et al., 2014). While the average age of men mentioned in all articles was 32, the report said that the real age is closer to 22 (Cicero et al., 2014). To properly inform the public of this health issue, it is imperative that print media educate the public about the population most heavily affected instead of feeding stigmas about opioid users.

This content analysis revealed that while the sampled articles still occasionally used the same hyperbole and negative stereotypes utilized during the Crack Scare in the late 1980s, the opioid crisis has been framed as an entirely different drug epidemic. The overall tone of the coverage was heavily sympathetic to white opioid users compared to the coverage of the Crack Scare, which villainized addicts as violent and dangerous. In turn, the public response and policy changes have reflected this, and have taken an entirely different route than the Crack Scare. The articles showed overwhelming support for treatment and recovery, some even citing the future financial benefits it may have on society. Researchers who analyzed the media coverage of opioid stated that "white opioid images have helped to carve out a separate space for white opioid use in the popular American imagination, one that leads to racially stratified therapeutic intervention and works to further insulate white communities from black and brown drug threats, leaving intact law enforcement crackdowns on black and brown urban residents in the name of public safety" (Hansen & Netherland, 2016, p. 664). While these societal changes on how to handle drug epidemics is positive and refreshing, it is disheartening to know that much of it is due to the demographics of the addict. To fully inform the public and limit negative media repercussions on policy change, it is essential that print media move away from the historical trend of feeding stereotyped imagery and stigmas and work on creating a complete view of the issue at hand, regardless of race, class, or location.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix

Coding sheet

Date	
Publication	*The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Union Leader*
Article Name	
Article Type	News Story, Feature Story, News Analysis
Location	Urban, Rural
Word Count	

Included Mentions of:

Criminal action taken against addict	Y/N
Healthcare Policy	Y/N
Hospital Costs	Y/N
Illegal Drug Activity	Y/N
Pharmaceutical Industry/Prescription Abuse	Y/N
Political Perspective	Y/N
Mention of Pregnancy/child born addicted	Y/N
Call for recovery or justice	Y/N

Characteristics of Users:

Age	
Race	
Gender	
Details about their addiction story	

Type(s) of Drug(s) Mentioned:

Hydrocodone	Oxycodone	Heroin	Fentanyl	OxyContin

Type(s) of Anitdote(s) Mentioned:

Naloxone/Narcan	Methadone	Buprenorphine

Tweeter-in-Chief: A Content Analysis
of President Trump's Tweeting Habits

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Abstract

Twitter has become one of the most prominent forms of modern communication, allowing users to curate information, update followers, and report news in real time, among other actions. Most recently, Twitter has provided an intimate look into the day-to-day thinking of the president of the United States. Donald Trump is among the most prolific users of the platform, expressing himself in front of a wide audience. Through a content analysis of Trump's tweets during his first seven months in the Oval Office, this study found that he has criticized more Republican lawmakers than Democrats, retweets Fox television shows at unprecedented levels, and employs tactics to delegitimize the press.

I. Introduction

Twitter is one of the most powerful tools in modern communication. The microblogging platform allows its 300 million monthly active users (Twitter, 2017) to compose 280-character messages to relay information to the general public. Politicians are one group that has benefitted from Twitter and relied upon it for networking (Ausserhofer & Maireder, 2013). Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign brought Twitter to the forefront of American politics, proving how it could be used effectively to communicate with likely voters (Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner & Welpe, 2010). Today, Twitter remains a forum for lively political debates and offers candidates an opportunity to discuss substantive issues. Perhaps the most prolific Twitter user in politics is Donald Trump, who has more than 43 million followers and more than 36,000 tweets. Trump has been an incredibly active Twitter user before his 2016 run for president, during his candidacy, and thus far into his presidency. Since September 28, 2016, he has tweeted an average of 7.5 times per day.

With Trump having just entered the Oval Office in January 2017, scholars have yet to systematically study his tweeting habits. Through a content analysis of Trump's tweets during his first seven months in office, this study will provide meaningful insight into a topic that has yet to be fully explored. It will specifically examine Trump's content message strategies, levels of tweet engagement and users most retweeted.

II. Literature Review

Twitter's Role in Politics

For nearly a decade, lawmakers have relied on social media to mobilize support during campaigns. Twitter, a microblogging platform that allows users to compose messages in 280 characters or fewer, has helped politicians in their networking efforts (Ausserhofer & Maireder, 2013). Former U.S. President Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign legitimized Twitter in the political arena by showing how it could be used to generate enthusiasm (Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner & Welpe, 2010). Although Twitter is a relatively new method of communication in the political sphere, it is widely used today by federal lawmakers.

Twitter remains a forum for lively political debates and offers candidates an opportunity to discuss substantive issues. The 2016 presidential election featured 17 Republican candidates, prompting many of them to try to stand out from the pack. Then-candidate Donald Trump distinguished himself with surprising successes during the Republican party primaries, and his communication style appeared to overcome any shortcomings with his questionable political platforms (Ahmadian, Azarshahi & Paulhus, 2017). What Trump lacked in policy, he gained in authenticity with the voters. Twitter allows political parties and individual politicians to bypass the press to speak directly with voters (Kalsnes, 2016). For individual candidates to stand out in crowded spaces, such as Twitter, it is important they effectively engage with their audiences.

Social Media Engagement

At the broadest level, engagement is the quality of a user's experience with technology (O'Brien, 2011). Mersey, Malthouse and Calder (2010) view engagement as the collective experiences an audience has with any given media brand. Earlier definitions of engagement have emphasized the psychological aspect in which users become cognitively involved in processing content (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2008). Such interpretations focus on the impact Twitter has on human emotions and social media's relationship with anxiety, stress, and other feelings. The concepts of engagement and audience take on a wide range of meanings in a social media context. On Twitter, engagement can be measured quantitatively through likes, retweets, replies, and impressions (Twitter, 2017). The concept of engagement can also be used to describe users' thoughts, behaviors, and feelings (O'Brien & Toms, 2008). McCay-Peet and Quan-Hasse (2016) propose a model for measuring social media engagement in which the following six factors are taken into account: self-presentation, action and participation, uses and gratifications, positive experiences, usage and activity counts, and social context. When politicians discover which tweets receive a higher number of engagements, they can create a feedback loop by sharing similar messages (McCay-Peet & Quan-Hasse, 2016).

Twitter users often try to send messages that align with what their audiences believe. Individuals present themselves differently based on whom they are communicating with to appeal to an imagined audience (Marwick & Boyd, 2010). When politicians try to appeal to an imagined audience, their followers might share messages simply because other people are sharing it. Those who have strong opinion leadership use Twitter more frequently than those with weak opinion leadership (Park, 2013). As some users seek to influence political conversations, others search for messages that align with their own beliefs (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1973). Previous scholarship has focused on the influence of politics on voters (Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner & Welpe, 2010; Park, 2013), whereas this study seeks to examine which types of tweets receive the highest levels of engagement from President Donald Trump during his first seven months in office.

RQ1: Which types of tweets receive the most engagement?

It will be interesting to explore how patterns in Trump's tweeting habits reflect his beliefs and those of his followers. With Trump entering the Oval Office earlier this year, there has been little time for substantive research on his tweeting habits. Even so, reporters and researchers have sought to better understand how Trump uses Twitter. Existing research conducted during the 2016 presidential election found that tweets coming from Trump's Android device on his @realDonaldTrump account were angrier and more negative, thus revealing that Trump himself directly tweets from an Android device while his staff members use an iPhone (Robinson, 2016). This study will explore differences in messaging between Trump and his staffers by distinguishing between tweets that come from Android devices and an iPhone.

On the campaign trail, Trump called Twitter "a powerful thing," a "modern method of communication," and boasted about the millions of people who follow him on social media. In a family town hall interview with CNN, though, Trump said he either wouldn't use Twitter at all as president or would use it very little (CNN, 2016). Thus far into his presidency, however, he has tweeted quite frequently, averaging about six tweets per day during his first seven months in office. Understanding what Trump tweets about and how he interacts with his followers will enhance readers' understanding of his social media habits. In some cases, Trump tweets with specific goals in mind, but in other cases, his brash comments get him into trouble and carry unintended consequences. Even so, he enjoys tweeting and views the platform as an asset (CNN, 2016).

RQ2: What message strategies does Donald Trump most frequently employ when tweeting?

RQ3: How does Twitter messaging differ between Trump staffers and Trump himself?

An informal canvassing of Trump's tweets prior to this study revealed a pattern of attacks on news organizations and individual reporters. Through Twitter, Trump has found a platform to circumvent the press to speak directly to his supporters while simultaneously aiming to discredit legitimate reporting. During his time as press secretary in the first several months under the Trump administration, Sean Spicer explained how the president views the role of Twitter as it relates to media criticism. In an interview with Ted Koppel on *CBS Sunday Morning*, Spicer said, "A lot of times, folks in the media feel threatened that he has a direct pipeline to the American people" (CBS Sunday Morning, 2017). Trump sees Twitter as a resource to disseminate positive information, while attacking coverage he considers inaccurate or unfair.

RQ4: How does Donald Trump use Twitter to delegitimize the press?

Through a content analysis of Trump's tweets during his first seven months in office, this study will provide meaningful insight into a topic that has yet to be fully explored. It will specifically examine Trump's content message strategies, levels of tweet engagement and top mentions.

III. Methods

Prior to the data analysis phase of this study, an informal canvassing of tweets was conducted to explore patterns in Trump's tweeting habits and generate research questions. For example, after discovering Trump frequently used the term "fake news" to describe unfavorable media coverage, a research question was created to examine how Trump uses Twitter to delegitimize the press.

Twitonomy, a subscription-based service offering downloadable datasets for publicly available tweets, was used during the data collection phase of this study. Tweets from Trump's first seven months in office (January 20, 2017-August 19, 2017) were placed into a

Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for further analysis. A span of seven months was used to ensure a large sample size of tweets was collected during important newsworthy events, such as the resignations of prominent members in Trump's administration. A total of 1,272 tweets were entered into the spreadsheet, and the text of each tweet was immediately cleaned. For instance, when tweets included "&" they were replaced with the word "and." Additionally, Twitter handles, such as "@seanhannity," were replaced with the actual names of users, such as "Sean Hannity." After the text of all tweets was cleaned, a word cloud was created using TagCrowd, a free data visualization site created by Daniel Steinbock that allows users to customize word clouds and visualize word frequencies. Words or phrases that appeared frequently signaled potential areas of study. The word cloud played a role in determining which variables should be considered for analysis and which content message strategies Trump most often employs. See *Figure 1*.
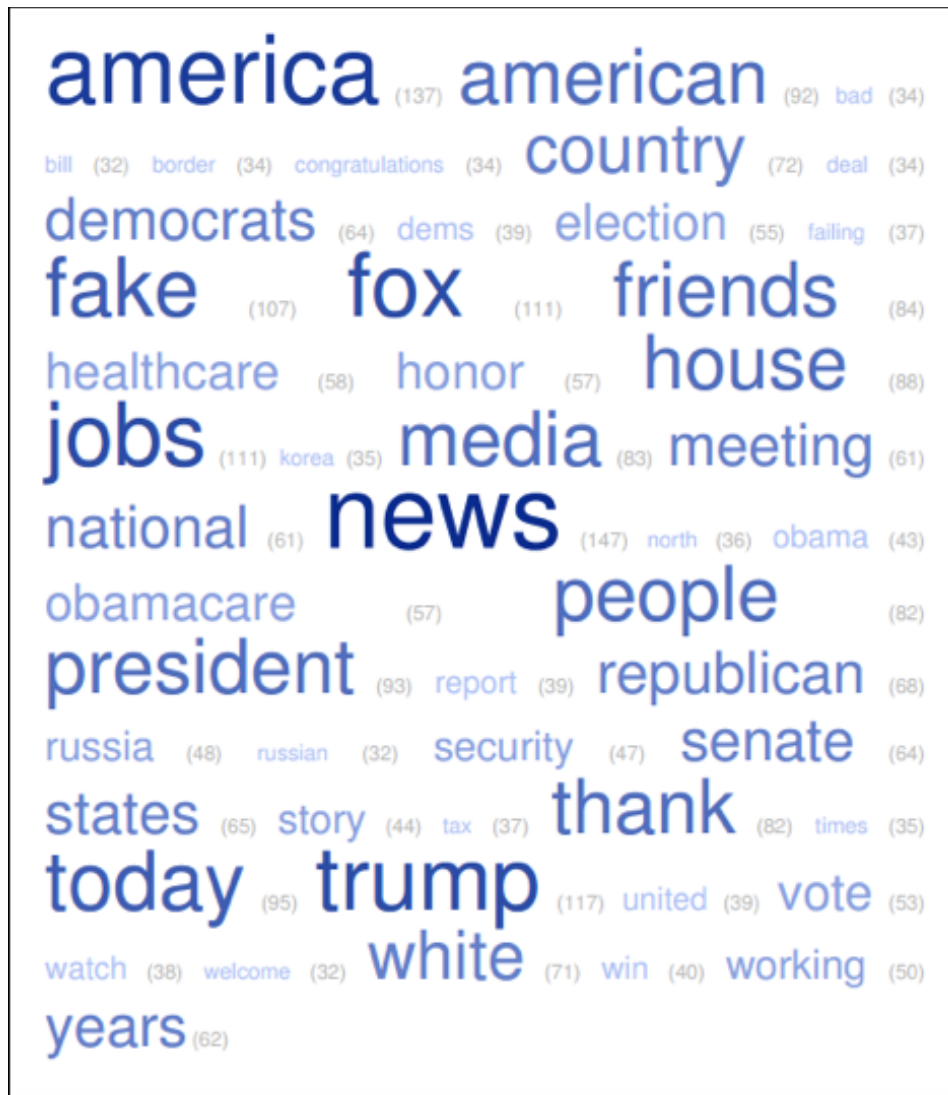
Figure 1. Word cloud textual analysis of Trump's tweets, with frequencies. Trump frequently mentioned himself, news coverage, lawmakers and Russia in his tweets.

Twitonomy, which automatically downloads the number of retweets and likes per tweet, was used to measure engagement. The number of replies on Trump's tweets constantly changes, making it impossible to get a precise number. Tweets often receive tens of thousands of replies, which make it difficult to determine who replies and actively engages with any given tweet. Because of the limitations of Twitonomy and the difficulty of measuring the number of people who replied to Trump tweets, replies were not included in this study's definition of engagement. Engagement was defined as the sum of retweets and likes. Other quantitative variables were not analyzed due to access restrictions. Data about the number of impressions, link clicks, media views and much more are limited to the individual user who owns and operates his or her account. Because Trump and his staffers are the ones who have access to the @realDonaldTrump Twitter Analytics page, engagement was simply operationalized as the sum of retweets and likes for the purposes of this study.

After the word cloud was generated, different content message strategy categories were created. All of Trump's 1,272 tweets from his first seven months in office were placed into one of the following six categories: media criticism, self-praise, praising others, personal attacks, policy, and other.

H1: *Tweets involving media criticism and personal attacks will receive the highest level of engagement as measured by likes and retweets.*

H2: Trump will most frequently attack the media and praise himself in his tweets. He will least often praise others and articulate policy positions.

To understand which tweets come from Trump and which tweets come from his staffers, this study will compare the use of iPhone (Trump staffers) with the use of Android (Trump himself). Twitonomy automatically sorts tweets by platform, which will be used to examine whether tweets coming from Android devices are more hyperbolic, as previously proven in existing research (Robinson, 2016).

H3: Tweets that come from an Android will be more hyperbolic and inflammatory than those coming from an iPhone. Additionally, tweets sent through an Android phone will be more likely to involve media criticism and personal attacks.

One pattern that emerged in an informal canvassing of tweets was Trump's frequency of media criticism. Phrases like "failing," "bad," and "story" were among the 50 most frequently mentioned words in Trump's tweets, as shown in the word cloud in *Figure 1*. Additionally, the term "fake news" was often used to describe unfavorable media coverage.

H4: Trump will try to delegitimize the media by retweeting from accounts that offer him favorable coverage. He will use negative phrases like "fake news" to describe credible reporting that is highly critical of his administration. When confronted with damaging information, Trump will seek to deflect blame onto other people through a technique known as whataboutism.

The aforementioned hypotheses do not address other variables analyzed in this study. One important subject for analysis will be retweets. To understand Trump's tweeting habits, it is important to examine which accounts he most frequently retweets from. Such an analysis provides insight into news sources and people Trump pays closest attention to. Additionally, this study analyzes personal attacks along party lines. Examining whether Trump criticizes Democrats or Republicans more frequently will provide meaningful insight into Trump's online behavior.

For the purposes of this study, tweets were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. A coding scheme using 0's and 1's was used to measure Trump's content message strategies. For example, if Trump offered media criticism in one of his tweets, that category would receive a "1" to represent that the tweet involved media criticism. At the same time, all other content message strategy categories would receive a "0" to represent that the tweet did not focus on policy points, personal attacks, self-praise, or praising of other people. No tweets received a "1" in multiple categories because this study aimed to analyze the predominant message of a tweet. No inter-coder reliability was conducted and no statistical programming software was used to determine levels of significance or correlations between engagement and other variables.

IV. Findings/Results

Several interesting findings emerged after analyzing all of Trump's 1,272 tweets.

H1: Tweets involving media criticism and personal attacks will receive the highest level of engagement as measured by likes and retweets.

Tweets that received the highest levels of engagement, as measured by the sum of retweets and likes, tended to articulate policy points. Of the 100 tweets with the highest levels of engagement, 39 focused on policy. Personal attacks ranked second, accounting for 20 of the top 100 tweets. Of the remaining tweets with the top 100 levels of engagement, 13 involved self-praise, 13 involved media criticism, nine involved praising others and six involved other topics. See *Figure 2*. An overwhelming majority of Trump's top tweets were original content. Only one of the top 100 tweets was a retweet. Trump's most popular tweet received nearly twice as many engagements as the next highest. The tweet, which received nearly a million overall engagements, was an old video of Trump fighting at a wrestling event. The face of a person Trump punched was replaced with a CNN logo. See *Figure 3*.
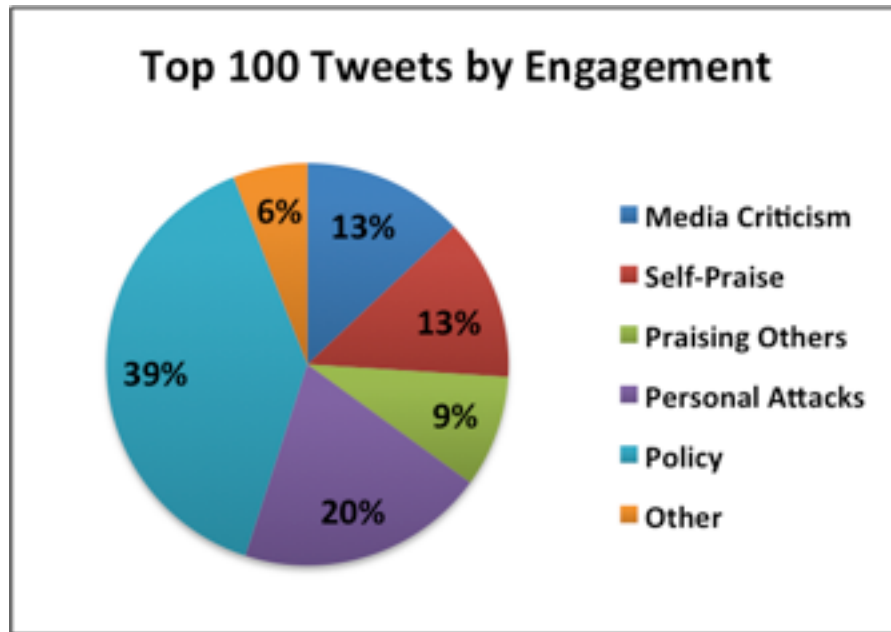
Figure 2. Trump's most engaged with tweets, as measured by the sum of retweets and likes; Tweets involving policy and personal attacks were among Trump's most popular, while those involving media criticism, self-praise, and praising others were the least popular.


Figure 3. Trump's most engaged with tweet features him punching a CNN logo

Trump's next most popular tweet was quite different. It received about half a million engagements and offered a more optimistic message stressing the importance of peace and unity. The tweet says, "Peaceful protests are a hallmark of our democracy. Even if I don't always agree, I recognize the rights of people to express their views." Though Trump's most engaged with tweet involved media criticism, 39 of the top 100 tweets focused on policy positions. While Trump's most popular tweets seldom involved media criticism, *H1* is partially supported given that Trump's most popular tweet showcased himself emphatically punching a news outlet's logo.

H2: Trump will most frequently attack the media and praise himself in his tweets. He will least often praise others and articulate policy positions.

In 30.7 percent of his tweets, Trump articulated policy positions. The remaining four content message strategies were more evenly split. He praised others in 17.4 percent of his tweets, made personal attacks in 16.7 percent of tweets, provided self-praise 15.1 percent of the time, and criticized the media in 13.8 percent of his tweets. Other tweets that didn't fall into any of the aforementioned categories accounted for 6.3 percent of the overall tweets. Trump's tweets were more likely to involve policy and praising others than media criticism and self-praise. *H2* was proven incorrect. See *Figure 4*.
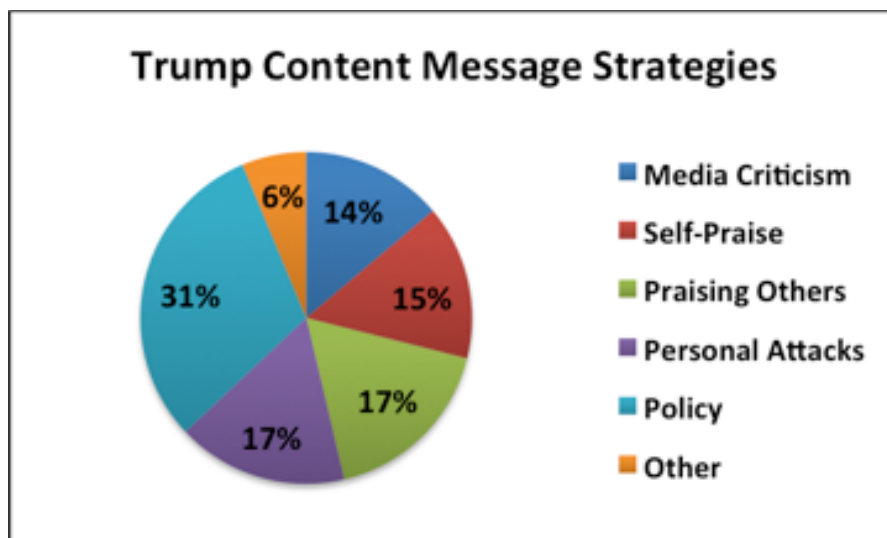
Figure 4. Distribution of tweets by content message strategy;Trump most frequently outlined policy positions, while least often criticizing the media.

H3: Tweets that come from an Android will be more hyperbolic and inflammatory than those coming from an iPhone. Additionally, tweets sent through an Android phone will be more likely to involve media criticism and personal attacks.

Correlation between tweet platform and messaging could not be determined due to a shift in Trump's tweeting behaviors. Early on in his presidency, he used Android devices. Over time, however, tweets were almost entirely sent through an iPhone, making it impossible to examine whether Trump himself tweeted or his staffers tweeted. *H3* could neither be supported nor refuted.

H4: Trump will try to delegitimize the media by retweeting from accounts that offer him favorable coverage. He will use negative phrases like "fake news" to describe credible reporting that is highly critical of his administration. When confronted with damaging information, Trump will seek to deflect blame onto other people through a technique known as whataboutism.

Trump delegitimized individual reporters and news organizations through a variety of techniques. Of his 1,272 tweets, 176 involved media criticism. Many of those tweets involved the words "fake news." The majority of tweets criticizing the media (51.1 percent) included the term "fake news." Trump most often criticized *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*. He also criticized ABC, NBC, CNN, and MSNBC. When

explaining his dissatisfaction with those news sources, Trump would associate negative information with fake news. For example, when news organizations released polls showing his approval rating was below 40 percent, Trump tweeted, "Any negative polls are fake news, just like the CNN, ABC, NBC polls in the election." If a news organization provided information Trump did not like, it was decried as fake news. Meanwhile, Trump engaged in personal attacks against specific reporters and engaged in "whataboutism," the practice of deflecting attention away from oneself onto a similar, yet unrelated topic. Trump uses it to broaden context, offer a counterpoint, divert blame, muddy the waters and confuse people (Zak, 2017). "When will Sleepy Eyes Chuck Todd and NBC News start talking about the Obama SURVEILLANCE SCANDAL and stop with the Fake Trump/Russia story?" Trump tweeted. In another tweet, he got more personal by attacking a female anchor's appearance. "I heard poorly rated Morning Joe speaks badly of me (don't watch anymore). Then how come low I.Q. Crazy Mika, along with Psycho Joe, came to Mar-a-Lago 3 nights in a row around New Year's Eve, and insisted on joining me. She was bleeding badly from a face-lift. I said no!"

In contrast, Trump praised news outlets that offered more favorable coverage of his administration. This phenomenon is perhaps most evident when looking at accounts he retweets. Trump retweeted 135 times during his first seven months. He retweeted *Fox and Friends*, a conservative morning talk show, 45 times. This was five times higher than any other user. Trump retweeted Fox News nine times, the Drudge Report seven times, and The White House five times. He retweeted family members and Fox News programs/anchors more than all other users combined. Of the 135 total retweets, 66 came from Fox-related accounts, eight came from Trump family members, and 61 came from all other accounts. *H4* was proven correct.

During the data analysis phase of this study, another major finding emerged. Trump tweeted a total of 212 personal attacks. 54 percent of those attacks were against Democrats, 21 percent were against Republicans and 25 percent were against other individuals, countries or groups of people. While a strong majority of criticisms were against Democrats, Trump tended to refer to Democrats more broadly. He often called the party obstructionist, but he seldom criticized individual Democrats. When he did criticize specific people, they were often related to the 2016 presidential election, such as President Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, John Podesta, and Loretta Lynch. In contrast, Trump called out more current Republican lawmakers than Democratic ones. See *Figure 5*. Trump often attacked Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Arizona Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake, South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham and North Carolina Rep. Mark Meadows. Trump also attacked members of his own administration, most notably Attorney General Jeff Sessions. "Attorney General Jeff Session has taken a VERY weak position on Hillary Clinton crimes (where are E-mails and DNC server) and Intel leakers!" Trump tweeted.

Personal Attacks on Lawmakers	
Democrats	**Republicans**
Richard Blumenthal	Jeff Flake
Adam Schiff	Lindsey Graham
Bill de Blasio	Mitch McConnell
Chuck Schumer	Jeff Sessions
Nancy Pelosi	Lisa Murkowski
	John McCain
	Mark Meadows
	Jim Jordan
	Raul Labrador
	Rand Paul
	Susan Collins

Figure 5. List of current lawmakers Trump has attacked on Twitter. (Note: Jeff Sessions previously served as an Alabama senator early on in Trump's presidency before being confirmed as attorney general.) Trump criticized about twice as many current Republican lawmakers as Democratic ones. In some tweets, he referenced people without using their names, but in other cases, he explicitly called out members of both major political parties.

V. Discussion

Findings from this study offer surprising revelations about Trump's tweeting habits. For example, when launching personal attacks, he criticized current Republican lawmakers more than Democratic opponents. While it is no surprise that Trump attacked a wide range of people on social media, it is unusual for a sitting president to be so openly critical of his own party and administration. When three Republican senators decided not to vote in favor of opening debate on a bill replacing the Affordable Care Act, Trump went on the offensive. While he suggested Democrats were obstructionists who were unanimously against his presidency, he focused more on political opposition within his own party. "3 Republicans and 48 Democrats let the American people down. As I said from the beginning, let ObamaCare implode, then deal. Watch!" The three Republican defectors were Maine Sen. Susan Collins, Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski, and Arizona Sen. John McCain. While he didn't identify those members by name, he did imply that they had halted his agenda.

In other tweets, Trump was more critical and willing to identify individual lawmakers. For example, he tweeted, "Senator Lisa Murkowski of the Great State of Alaska really let the Republicans, and our country, down yesterday. Too bad!" When McCain and Graham spoke out against Trump's proposed travel ban on Muslim-majority nations, Trump tweeted that "they are sadly weak on immigration" and "should focus their energies on ISIS, illegal immigration and border security instead of always looking to start World War III." While Trump had his fair share of criticisms about the Democratic Party, his attacks on current Republican lawmakers were brasher and more frequent. Trump also launched personal attacks on national security leaders and federal judges. After a court ruling halted Trump's proposed travel ban, he tweeted, "The opinion of this so-called judge, which essentially takes law-enforcement away from our country, is ridiculous and will be overturned!" At the time of Trump's decision to fire FBI Director James Comey, he issued a threat before Comey was schedule to publicly testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee. In one tweet, Trump said "James Comey better hope that there are no 'tapes' of our conversations before he starts leaking to the press!" Trump later insisted he did not secretly record his private conversations with Comey. Through Twitter, though, Trump cast doubt into the minds of his followers about Comey's credibility. Attacking court judges, an FBI director, and members of one's own party is unprecedented.

One unexpected result from this study was the frequency in which Trump discusses policy matters. In many cases, Trump informs the public about meetings he has with foreign leaders, such as Chinese President Xi Jinping and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. While many of his policy-related tweets focused on telling his followers whom he was meeting with, Trump occasionally announced or teased out future policy decisions. For example, in one tweet, Trump kept military leaders and followers in suspense after the ominous tweet shown below:

Nine minutes later, Trump announced his intent to ban transgender individuals from serving in the military because of the medical costs associated with sex reassignment surgery.

Throughout Trump's presidency, he has criticized news organizations that provide unfavorable coverage of his administration. While it's not unusual for politicians to express their displeasure with members of the media, it is unusual to see where Trump turns to receive his news. Trump often turns to Fox News for favorable coverage. He retweets content from *Fox and Friends* five times more often than any other Twitter user. Trump retweets more from his family and Fox-related shows and reporters than all other users, combined. While it's no secret Trump is a fan of Fox News, it is surprising how often he disseminates the network's content. By dismissing actual reporting from credible news outlets and sharing questionable, opinionated content from Fox News, Trump seeks to delegitimize the media. Trump considers *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, NBC, ABC, CBS and CNN to be fake news. When tweeting about those news organizations, he often portrays himself as the victim of a media misinformation campaign. He also tells his followers that the media is *their* enemy. One noteworthy Trump tweet says the following: "The FAKE NEWS media (failing New York Times, NBC News, ABC, CBS, CNN) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American people!"

Trump's words go beyond brash remarks and open hostility toward the media. He actively shares conspiracy theories from Fox News hosts. Trump once retweeted a message from Sean Hannity promoting an appearance from Newt Gingrich, a Trump ally and former Speaker of the House. In the tweet, Hannity said he and Gingrich would discuss "the Deep State's allies in the media." The term "Deep State" suggests people within the federal government are undermining Trump's authority and are actively exploiting the media to undermine his agenda. While Trump staffers have offered anonymous comments to journalists and government officials have handed over classified documents to news organizations, Trump retweeting Sean Hannity signals that he believes there is an underground government effort to remove him from office. The people who have Trump's eyes and ears, such as Sean Hannity, wield tremendous power in shaping what Trump talks about on Twitter.

This study is neither a criticism nor affirmation of Trump's behaviors on social media. It is merely an examination of his use of Twitter during the first seven months of his presidency. This study aims to provide greater insight into an area of research that has received little attention.

VI. Limitations

This study did not measure replies as a factor of engagement due to logistical concerns. Understanding how users respond to Trump's tweets and which replies receive the most retweets and likes is important to understanding the impact of Trump's behaviors on Twitter. Because this study focused on the messaging of Trump's tweets, it did not examine the reactions to his messaging. Future research into this topic could adopt qualitative and quantitative methods to examine which groups of people reply to Trump's tweets, how often they reply, and what they say when they reply.

Since joining Twitter in March 2009, Trump has published more than 36,000 tweets. This study focused exclusively on 1,272 tweets from his first seven months in the White House, thus excluding a large sample size before, during, and after his presidency. It would be worthwhile to examine how Trump's messaging on Twitter evolved during the course of his 2016 presidential election. It'd also be interesting to find out whether the tactics he employed on the campaign trail are consistent with how he tweeted before

he ran for public office and how he tweets today as president. Though this study has some limitations, the findings offer critical insight into Trump's tweeting habits.

VII. Conclusion

Through a content analysis of 1,272 tweets during Trump's first seven months as president, this study explored what Trump tweets about, which tweets receive the highest levels of engagement, and how Trump works to delegitimize the press. Findings reveal that Trump criticizes more Republican lawmakers than Democrats. Additionally, he disseminates a significant amount of information from conservative talk shows, such as Fox and Friends. Trump tweets about a number of subjects, and tweets that are most frequently engaged with appear in a number of categories, ranging from policy, self-praise, praising others, personal attacks and media criticism. Results from this study are unique since there has been little existing research about Trump's use of Twitter as president. Even so, they are consistent with prior findings about the influence of social media in shaping political conversations (Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner & Welpe, 2010; Park, 2013). Though Twitter has only been used by one president before Trump, existing research supports this study's finding that the social networking platform plays a prominent role in shaping peoples' political attitudes (Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner & Welpe, 2010).

Acknowledgments

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The Influence of the Kardashian-Jenners on Fourth Wave Feminism Through Digital Media Platforms

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Abstract

Thanks to its decade-long TV show, profitable business ventures, and robust social media platforms, the Kardashian-Jenner family has an incredible digital media presence. The family, centered on strong, independent women, is "unapologetically sex- and body-positive" and more trans-aware than most other celebrities – three characteristics that are staples of fourth-wave feminism. This study examined if the Kardashian-Jenners encourage their target audience to adapt these traits. The study found that while they partially encourage body-positivity and sex-positivity, they have led the general population to be trans-aware. This research suggests the Kardashian-Jenners are serious media influencers who share a semi-positive, non-purposeful feminist message.

I. Introduction

The Kardashian-Jenners do not qualify themselves as feminists. *Feminism* is not a word that is often uttered on their hit reality television show or within their multitude of popular businesses. However, the family is unfailingly matriarchal and female-centric. The Kardashian-Jenners are accidental feminists.

Kris Jenner, the "momager," runs the show—quite literally. In addition to serving as an executive producer for their decade-long running TV show, she manages herself and her six children: Kim, Kourtney, Khloe, Kendall, Kylie, and Rob. She is the matriarch and is responsible for the significant revenue this family has raked in over the past 10 years. The family is centered on strong, independent women.

Kim, Khloe, and Kourtney Kardashian—the eldest three sisters—have faced constant criticism from the start of their careers about their curvy bodies and comfort with their sexualities. These women are fiercely independent. Though the world has watched them date, get married, and have children, they make it clear that they do not depend on their significant others in any way, shape, or form. Kendall and Kylie Jenner, the youngest sisters, are young adult and have flourishing careers and businesses of their own. Rob, the single brother and son, has only recently come back into the spotlight following an exodus because of body-image issues. It took his girlfriend, Blac Chyna, to get him to return to the public eye. Lastly, there is Caitlyn Jenner, formerly Bruce Jenner. Her transition was incredibly public, and her family never failed to support her as a woman. None of her children or stepchildren disowned her, and they all shared trans-accepting messages to

their followers.

The Kardashian-Jenners are dominant on social media. Their followers are in the millions, they can't go anywhere without a bodyguard, and their business products are in high demand. They have branded themselves as sexy women who do what they want, are not afraid of their sexualities, and practice self-love. Recently they are debatably trans-inclusive, since Caitlyn began her transition in 2015. Their trans-inclusivity is questionable for many in the LGBTQIA community, but they have advocated enough to be considered trans-aware and trans-accepting.

It is hard to put the feminist movement in a neat, tidy box—but the concept of different "waves" seems to help. The Kardashian-Jenner brand falls into the realm of fourth-wave feminism. Experts argue that 2017 is in the midst of the fourth wave. It is mostly online and digital, where artists, celebrities, and average social media users employ their bodies to make statements about race, class, gender, sexuality, and bodily autonomy. The digitally driven fourth-wave feminism is sex-positive, trans-accepting, and body-positive (Baumgardner, 250).

Sex-positivity, according to the Women and Gender Advocacy Center at Colorado State University, can be defined as the idea that all sex is a positive thing, as long as it is healthy and explicitly consensual. Trans-accepting feminism includes trans women, and does not prefer cis women over trans women. Trans-accepting feminism considers trans issues to be feminist issues. To be body-positive is to support and accept all shapes and sizes, to promote comfort in one's own skin, and to encourage women to make their own choices about their bodies.

As mentioned earlier, the Kardashian-Jenners have an incredible online presence, and their fans and followers get the vast majority of their information about this family through digital media. People have built serious parasocial relationships with this family through a strictly digital platform. And within this platform, the women in the Kardashian-Jenner clan have posted and talked constantly and openly about their sexualities, their bodies, and Caitlyn's transition.

This study explored the Kardashian-Jenners' impact on the confidence of their social media followers and TV audiences in the context of fourth-wave feminism. Are followers of the Kardashian-Jenners encouraged to be more sex-positive, body-positive, and trans-aware because of the family's prominent digital presence?

II. Literature Review

The Kardashian-Jenners are perhaps the greatest accidental feminists of all time. "The qualifier 'accidental' in this title is a crucial one, one meant to suggest that these women have stumbled upon a way to pioneer the movement into its next iteration, rather than having tirelessly dedicated their lives towards equality" (Kirkpatrick). Nonetheless, they are "unapologetically sex- and body-positive," and are more trans-aware than most other celebrities, especially in reality television (Kirkpatrick). These three characteristics that the Kardashian-Jenners exhibit are staples of the new fourth-wave feminism, which is manifesting itself digitally. Understanding the social media and TV popularity of the Kardashian-Jenners is crucial to this study.

Members of the Kardashian-Jenners family have a robust social media presence. According to the Social Blade (2017), two of the 10 most-followed Instagram accounts of 2017 belong to members of the Kardashian-Jenner clan (Refer to *Figure 1*).
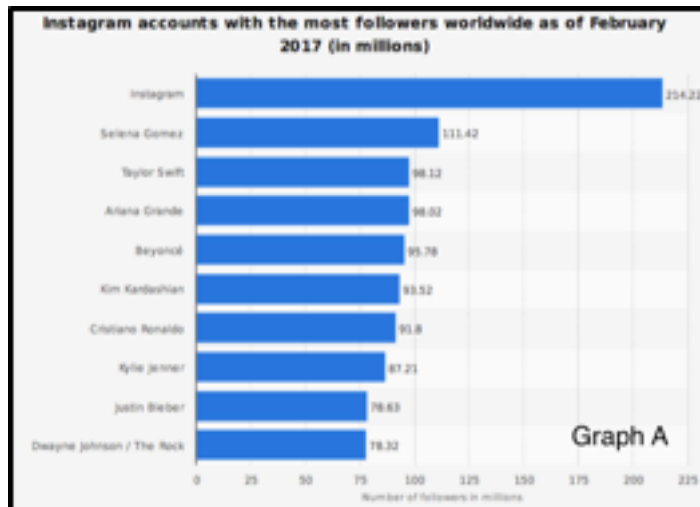
Figure 1. 10 most-followed Instagram accounts of 2017 includes Kim Kardashian and Kylie Jenner.

Kim Kardashian and Kylie Jenner are both huge influencers on Instagram, with 93.52 million and 87.21 million followers, respectively ("YouGov"). The family members not only have an online presence, but they also have a 10-year-old hold on cable television. *Keeping Up With The Kardashians* has been on E! Network since 2007, with four spin-off shows, and there are no plans of the series ending. *Figure 2* shows that docu-series shows, like *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, are the second-most popular reality genre (after cooking shows) for young adults ages 18-34 years old. This is the millennial generation, which is the most proficient with social media. This generation "keeps up" both by watching the Kardashian-Jenners and following their social media accounts.
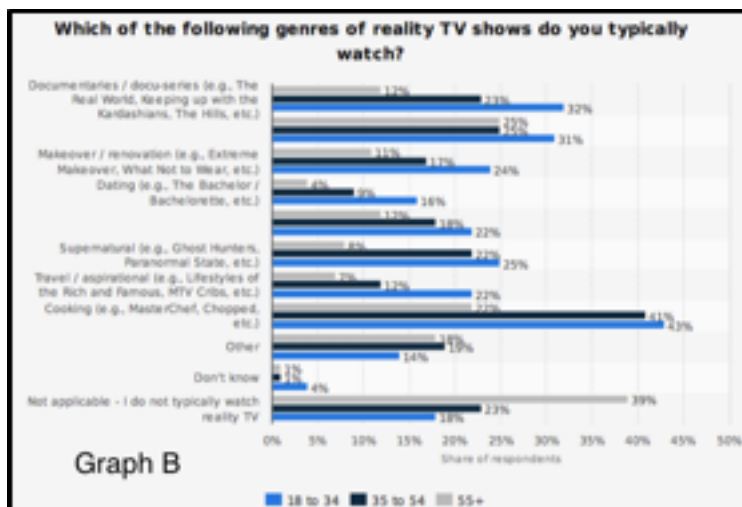

Figure 2. Genres of reality TV shows

Parasocial Relationship

Rubin and McHugh (1987) describe in depth the traditional nature of a parasocial relationship, as it was developed in the 1980s. "Parasocial interaction is a one-sided interpersonal relationship that television viewers establish with media characters" (280). Rubin and McHugh note that television networks purposefully seek physically and personally attractive characters in hopes that a bond of intimacy will form when audiences view these characters over time. The more viewing interaction that occurs, the stronger this bond will become. "Parasocial interaction results from both exposure and attraction. In interpersonal and mediated contexts, this process is thought to result in increased relationship importance" (281).

Rubin and McHugh also found that viewers still engage in the parasocial relationship when their television is off. A relationship can easily continue if the TV show is not playing, just like a friendship continues when the friends are not together (280). This is important to note because the Kardashian-Jenner family can continue the relationship with its viewers through social media.

In her comparison of different reality TV genres, Henry (2011) found that documentary soap operas, such as *Keeping Up With The Kardashians*, warrant a stronger parasocial relationship formed over other reality genres, such as reality game shows. Henry reasons that this could be that shows like *Keeping Up* frequently break the "fourth wall" with confessional scenes to the audiences. The illusion of conversation between media personalities and the audience creates a seemingly face-to-face relationship. In a study comparing Instagram to Twitter in strength of parasocial interaction, Williams (2016) found that "the platform primarily used by celebrities for interpersonal relationships with fans is Twitter, while Instagram is used to show interpersonal relationships with those the celebrity knows personally" (20).

The Kardashian-Jenners are masters at the parasocial relationship, especially on digital platforms. "Questions like 'Is my hair too dark?' lure audiences into thinking that the desire of and respect for opinions resemble an actual friend-like connection with the celebrity" (Lueck 99). Lueck explains that the Kardashian-Jenners post content containing personal information, but they do not know the same details about their audience; this one-sided information is an indicator for parasocial interaction (99). The Kardashian-Jenners are celebrities who "promote a lifestyle through reality television and social media that is socially accepted and admired. Audiences then, especially females, begin to engage in Parasocial Interaction by wanting to imitate their idol and to create closeness through communication" (Lueck, 103).

Fourth-Wave Feminism

Before delving into fourth-wave feminism, the first three waves of the movement must be examined. In her study of the rise of fourth-wave feminism, Wrye (2009) explains that first-wave feminism is all about the suffragettes and the women's right to vote. It was essentially a political change movement. The suffragettes not only supported a woman's right to votes, but they also championed the abolition of slavery, and supported women's education on a broad scale (185). Second-wave feminism "critiqued rigid sex roles; claimed economic parity; validated women's desire for sexual pleasure; and widened feminism's scope to take in critical differences among women, from sexuality to class to race and ethnicity" (185). The Third Wave is described by Wrye as intersectional, meaning that multiple group identities intersect to create our identity. Third-wave feminists also use their bodies for personal expression. The wave is sex-positive and it includes queer sexuality, transgenderism and transsexuality, and disability activism (Wrye, 185).

The fourth wave of feminism is essentially an extension of the third wave, and it takes place online. "The Fourth Wave enacted the concepts that Third Wave feminists had put forth" (Baumgardner 2011, 250). In an interview by *New York Times Magazine* with Jessica Urlenti, Feministing.com founder and editor, the successful blogger mentioned why fourth-wave feminism is starting to replace third-wave. Feministing.com is one of the most widely read feminist publications online. Urlenti says that she knows people who are considered third-wave feminists who are 20 years older than her. She alludes to the fact that the fourth-wave is online, and that is where the modern woman is expressing her liberties. She says the Internet has freed women to do amazing things (Soloman 2009).

In her article about the rise of fourth-wave feminism, Munroe (2013) argues that older feminists are out of touch with inclusivity and intersectionality, and online spaces often call them out on these topics. These online spaces are where a younger generation of "third-wave feminists" express their views—thus creating the fourth wave. She argues that the key to fourth-wave feminism is intersectionality, which includes trans-rights. "Contemporary feminism is characterized by its diversity of purpose, and amid the cacophony of voices it is easy to overlook one of the main constants within the movement as it currently stands – its reliance on the internet" (22).

"In place of zines and songs, young feminists created blogs, Twitter campaigns, and online media with names like Racialicious and Feministing, or wrote for Jezebel and Salon's Broadsheet. They commented on the news, posted their most stylish plus-size fashion photos with info about where to shop, and tweeted that they, too, had had an abortion. 'Reproductive justice,' coined by women of color in the 1990s, became the term of choice for young feminists. Transgenderism, male feminists, sex work, and complex relationships within the media characterized their feminism" (Baumgardner, 251).

Methods

Qualitative data was collected because feelings on the Kardashian-Jenners, body-positivity, sex-positivity, and trans-awareness cannot be expressed in numbers. Also numerical data was collected to see a difference among groups. This study relied on a survey and a focus group, whose participants were women or gender-nonconforming ages 34 and under, the target audience of *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*.

Although anybody could have participated in the survey, most answers came from women and gender-nonconforming participants ages 34 and under. The first section of the survey dealt with participants' demographics. The second section asked the respondents about their viewing habits of *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, which of the Kardashian-Jenners they follow on Instagram, and if they consider themselves fans. Questions were asked to determine the strength of a parasocial relationship respondents have with the family. Determining if a parasocial relationship exists in the participant's mind is important in this study. The words "parasocial relationship" were not used in these questions. The respondents may not have clearly understood what they were while answering if these words had been used. Other words like "parasocial relationships," "body-positivity," "sex-positivity," or "trans-awareness" were not used in the survey, either.

The third section asked three questions on body-positivity after showing participants four Instagram posts from various members of the Kardashian-Jenner family.

The fourth section included a quote taken from the app of Khloe Kardashian, a short clip from an old episode of *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, and a viral Instagram post from Kim Kardashian. Each of these elements was used to gauge the participant's views on sex-positivity.

The fifth section dealt with the participant's memory of the news-media. This section first seeks to measure if the Kardashian-Jenners have made their followers more trans-aware. The questions then go one step further and seek to see if the family inspired general trans-acceptance.

A focus group was conducted to ask questions about survey results that were unusual. Most of the questions were "why do you think people responded as they did in the survey?"

Results and Analysis

Among 160 survey respondents, 158 of them were ages 18-34, and two of them were under 18. Out of the respondents, 159 identified as female, and one identified as gender variant/non-conforming. Seven participated in a focus group, ages 19-22, were sophomores, juniors, and seniors at Elon University.

Kardashian-Jenner Media Habits and Parasocial Relationships

In response to Question 1 of "How often do you watch *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*?" 83.2% of the respondents have seen the show at some time; 16.9% had never seen the show; and 23.8% of respondents frequently or always watch the show.

Question 2 asked "On a scale of 1-10, how connected do you feel to the Kardashian-Jenners when you watch their show?" with "1" meaning they do not feel connected at all, and "10" meaning they feel very connected. Most respondents at least feel some level of connection to the family when they watch the show: 57 respondents feel connected at a medium level or higher. The dominant category was the lowest level. All 27 who have never seen the show answered "1" –they may have chosen "0" instead of "1" if the former had existed on the scale as the lowest level.
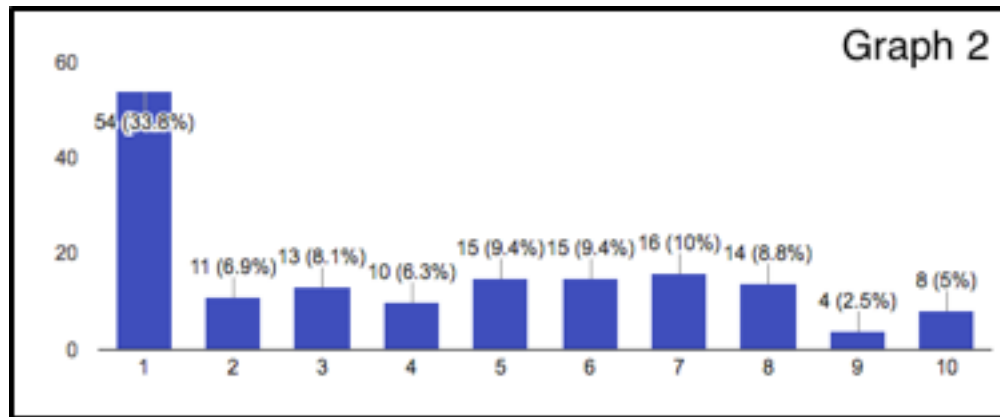
Figure 3. The level of connection people felt with the Kardashians-Jenners

Regarding question 3 asking which Kardashian-Jenner women the respondents follow on Instagram, Kim Kardashian was chosen by 30%. Kourtney Kardashian was indicated by 26.3%; Khloe Kardashian by 28.1%, Kylie Jenner by 33.1%, Kendall Jenner by 35%, Kris Jenner by 12.5%, and Caitlyn Jenner by 5.6%. 44.4% indicated following none, and 6.3% had no Instagram accounts.

Question 4 was "On a scale of 1-10, how well do you think you know the Kardashian-Jenners?" with "1" meaning not well at all, and "10" meaning very well. Figure 4 shows that the respondents' perception of their knowing the Kardashian family is higher than their feeling of being very connected to them during their show. Many respondents replied that they do not follow any of the Kardashian-Jenners on Instagram and hardly ever watch the show, yet they feel they know the family at levels of a "6" or above out of "10."
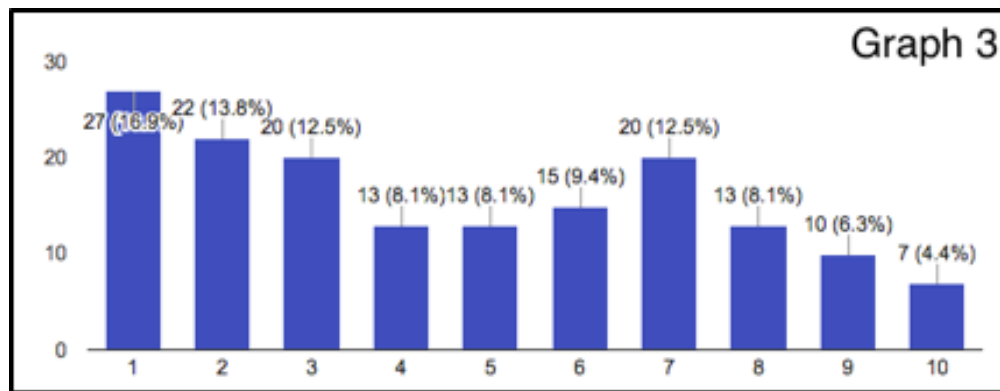

*Figure 4.* How well do you think you know the Kardashian-Jenners?

When asked about why they think this happened, focus group participants pointed out that the Kardashian-Jenners are frequently in the news. They are also always "popping up on social media feeds" and "their presence is always thrown in your face." "If people are seeing that, even if they don't follow them on social media, they are very much exposed to what they are doing." Another explanation was that the Kardashian-Jenners have "a lot of reach" because of their relationships with other famous people. For example, if someone doesn't like the Kardashian-Jenners, but they like Kanye West, then they may pay attention to the family more than they would if Kanye West was not married to Kim Kardashian. The Kardashian-Jenners have achieved a feat that very little other reality stars have. They have created a parasocial or semi-parasocial relationship with consumers who do not directly consume their media.

Contrary to that fact, individuals who were avid watchers and followers of the family feel like they know them less than they did. It was pointed out that people who watch and follow the family might keep coming back for more content because they feel like they don't know them well and are in search of authentic moments.

When asked if the respondent considered herself a fan of the Kardashian-Jenners, the largest number of survey participants answered "No" (30%), followed by "Neutral" (26.2%), "Yes" (25.6%), and "Maybe" (18.1%).   Many respondents replied that they are not fans of the Kardashian-Jenners, yet they feel they know the family at a "6" or above level out of "10." This further backs up the theory that the Kardashian-Jenners have been able to establish a parasocial relationship with people who do not consider themselves fans.

Body Positivity

One question in the survey focused on body positivity using Image 1 in *Figure 5*. The question asked, "If you took a photo in a similar pose and outfit, would you want to post it on Instagram?" This question was asked to find out if Kylie Jenner's body confidence inspires others around her age to be confident in showing off their bodies in a similar fashion, even if some consider her body "unattainable."
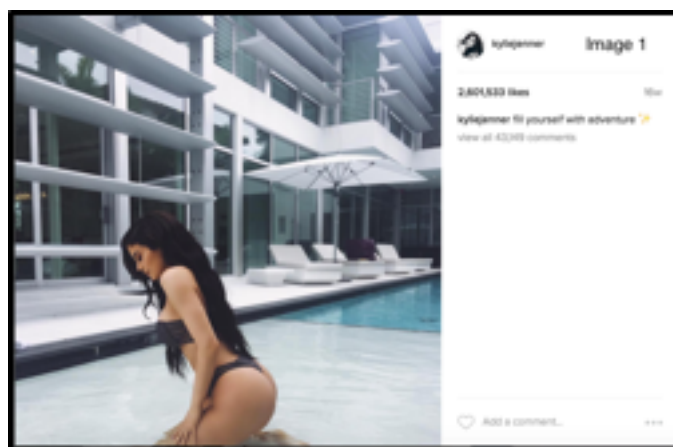
Figure 5. An image revealing buttocks

Overwhelmingly, respondents said "No" (76.1%), followed by "Maybe" (14.5%) and "Yes" (9.4%). After seeing image 2 in Figure 6, one of seven focus group participants said, "yes, they would post," two said, "maybe," and four said, "no." One explanation given was that people don't want their family to see this, or potential employers.
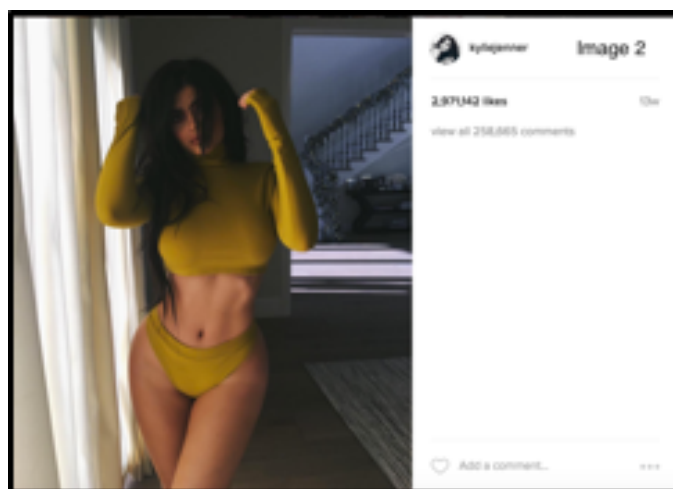
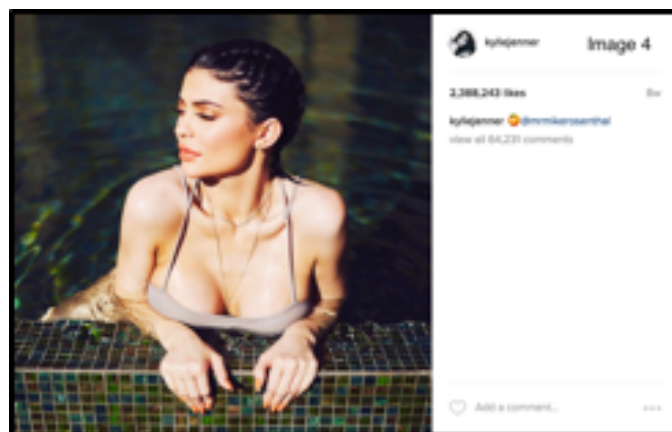*Figure 6.* An image revealing a navel

Figure 7. An image in workout clothes

After seeing Image 3 in *Figure 7*, four focus group participants said "Yes" they would post, one said "Maybe," and two said they would not post. More said "Yes" to this photo because they feel a workout outfit is more acceptable and less intimate than a bodysuit or bikini.

After seeing Image 4 in *Figure 8*, three focus group participants said "Yes" they would post, and four said "Maybe," none said they would not post. The participants mostly concurred that women are more inclined to post a photo showing off their breasts rather than their butt.

Figure 8. An image revealing breasts

The next question in this section showed a screenshot of an Instagram post from Kim Kardashian. After being shown Image 5 in *Figure 9*, including the caption written by Kim Kardashian, participants were asked, "Would you feel psychologically comfortable using a waist shaper/trainer because Kim Kardashian posts about using one?"

Figure 9. Kim Kardashian in a waist shaper/trainer

The answer was again overwhelmingly "No." Of 160 participants, 71.9% said "No," followed by "Maybe" (14.4%) and "Yes" (13.8%).

The modern body-positive movement does not shame women who change their bodies in unnatural ways because it makes them feel more confident, and because they want to do so. The Kardashian-Jenners change their bodies often. Kylie receiving lip injections, Kourtney has breast implants, the family is open about liposuction and Botox, and they all advertise products like waist trainers and "Fit Tea." As a result, the author asked the focus group whether they would be okay with doing this to themselves.

The focus group participants pointed out that waist trainers are widely known to be unsafe for women's health, especially related to internal organs. Some said they would have answered "No" to using a waist trainer, but perhaps "Yes" to getting lip injections or liposuction.

Regarding why they think society still has a stigma against getting cosmetic work done, costs aside, one participant said she sees getting work done in two different categories: adding to self vs. subtracting from self. She thinks adding to oneself (such as a breast enhancement or lip injections) is worse than subtracting from oneself (such as liposuction or a waist trainer). "Subtracting to me is more acceptable because you're not putting fakeness into your body," she said.

The last question in this body-positivity section of the survey was based upon two Instagram posts from Khloe Kardashian, talking about her jean line created to fit women of all different shapes and sizes, as shown in *Figure 10*. When asked to look at two images and their captions, written by Khloe Kardashian and respond to a question of "Does the way Khloe Kardashian talks about body positivity make you feel good about the way you look?" 45% felt good, followed by "Maybe" (35%) and "No" (20%).

Figure 10. Two Instagram posts from Khloe Kardashian, talking about her jean line created to fit women of all different shapes and sizes

Sex Positivity

In the sex-positivity section of the survey, one question focused on sex education, which is important in the sex-positivity movement. Sex education does not necessarily refer to the basic sex education that children learn in school, but it refers to educating yourself on a wide range of sex-related topics. Survey participants was shown a clip from *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, where a pregnant Kourtney Kardashian and her partner Scott Disick go to a class about sex during pregnancy. In the clip, Kourtney is scared about having sex while pregnant, and this class helps her learn that sex during pregnancy is safe. After watching the video, survey participants asked, "Do you feel that you could benefit from a sex-education class of any kind?" Among the participants of 160, 23.1% said "Yes," while 36.3% said "No" and 40.6% said "Maybe."

When showing the focus group this result, one participant immediately said, "36.3% are lying," while referring to those who said 'No' to this question. She said there are so many classes you can take that are beyond "this is how not to get pregnant," and perhaps people don't realize the extent of options out there. One participant said "we have such a weird stigma in this country about not talking about sex, and that's why we have a lot of problems with unwanted pregnancies and STI's (sexually transmitted infection), because people don't know, but they *think* they do. They think they've got a handle on it when they really don't." Another participant said generally sex is taboo in this country, since many people are brought up in a religion that forbids it; people feel they cannot talk about it.

The last question in this section relates to comfort with nudity and the female body. After viewing Image 8 in *Figure 11*, participants were asked, "On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable are you with the image above, posted by Kim Kardashian?" with "1" meaning they do not feel comfortable at all, and "10" meaning they feel very comfortable. As *Figure 12* showed, the majority of respondents (21.3%) feel total comfort with the naked image. This is a positive outcome for sex-positivity, as it shows that respondents are comfortable with nudity and the female body.
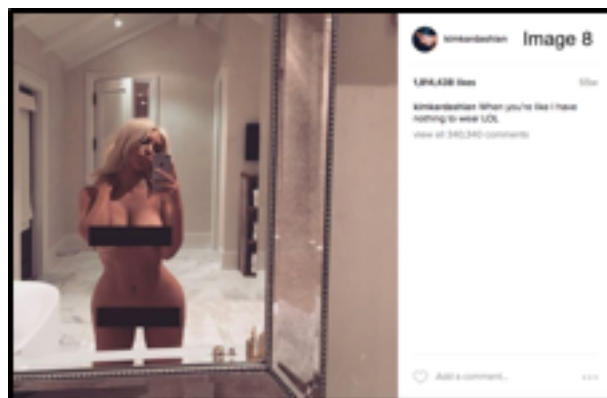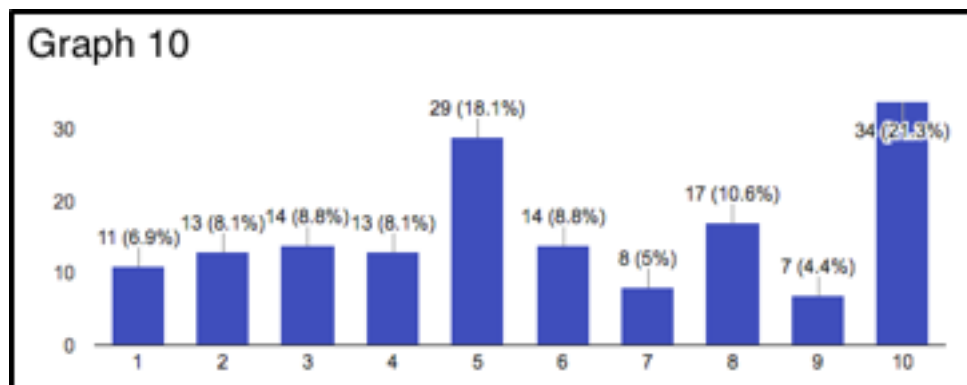

Figure 11. A nude image of a female body

Figure 12. How comfortable are you with the nude image of a female body?

Trans-Awareness

One question about trans-awareness and trans-acceptance was based on prior knowledge. The question was "In April of 2015, Caitlyn Jenner revealed her identity as a trans woman. Before her very public transition, had you ever seen trans issues being widely discussed in the media?" The majority of respondents (50.6%) said "No," they had never seen transgender issues being discussed in mainstream media before, followed by 26.3% of "Yes" and 22.5% of "Maybe." Only 1 respondent did not know of Caitlyn Jenner's transition until the survey.

The second question in this section, open-ended, asked, "Have you become more aware of specific struggles that the trans community faces because of what you have seen of Caitlyn Jenner? If so, what issues have been brought to your attention?" Caitlyn Jenner is generally understood to be a poor representation of the trans community, but a lot of people replied that they learned at least one thing from her transition. One respondent even responded that they learned what transitioning is. Many said that though Caitlyn doesn't do a great job of bringing attention to trans struggles herself, just the fact that she transitioned and the media paid attention to it laid a path for others, like Laverne Cox, to step up and speak about trans rights.

The last question was about an Instagram post from Kim Kardashian, showing Caitlyn Jenner's Vanity Fair cover and its caption, which reads *"Caitlyn Jenner for Vanity Fair (camera emoji) Annie Leibovitz! How beautiful! Be happy, be proud, live life YOUR way!"* When asked, "Do you feel more accepting of the trans community because the Kardashian-Jenners are accepting?" 79.4% answered "Not more accepting" and 11.9% answered "Yes," while 9 (5.6%) said "No," not accepting trans-gender, a very small portion of people out of 160.

Conclusion

The Kardashian-Jenners partially encourage the fourth-wave feminist notions of body-positivity and sex-positivity in their target audience, and they have made their target audience trans-aware, and trans-accepting. They have also created one of the strongest parasocial relationships in reality television history; not only among fans, but also among people who do not directly try to consume the media content the family produces. The majority of people who do not follow the Kardashian-Jenners actively still think they know the family.

As the results about body-positivity show, the family makes their target audience feel good about their own looks through their words. This is the surface level definition of body positivity: feeling good about the way you look. Delving deeper into the body-positivity movement, not many women feel inspired to show off their bodies like the Kardashian-Jenners do. A limitation, pointed out by the focus group, is that the author may have gotten more positive responses for this question if she had used a different post of Kylie Jenner's. Most respondents did not feel psychologically comfortable changing their bodies unnaturally, but this does not mean they necessarily make judgments about other people who do. A limitation on this survey was that the author did not ask if participants judged the Kardashian-Jenners on the work they have had done.

The Kardashians encourage sex-positivity in the respondents more so than body-positivity. The majority of respondents felt comfortable with Kim Kardashian's nude Instagram post. Among respondents, 63.7% definitely or maybe feel that they could benefit from a sex education class.

More than any other category, the Kardashian-Jenners have inspired trans-awareness. Over 50% of respondents had not seen trans issues being discussed in the mainstream media before Caitlyn Jenner transitioned. The family has also encouraged followers to be trans-accepting. A majority of respondents were not any more trans-accepting than they were before seeing Kim Kardashian's Instagram post, but 11.9% of respondents felt more trans-accepting after seeing the post.

Much research has been done about parasocial interaction, but this research is very specific in determining the relationship formed. Future research may look at comments on Kardashian-Jenner Instagrams displaying fourth-wave feminist notions, coding them as positive or negative reactions, and comparing their size.

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Seinfeld and the American Sitcom as a Catalyst for Youth Socialist Values

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Abstract

Seinfeld*, a wildly popular sitcom broadcast in the 1990s, has been subject to countless reviews, explorations, and critiques—a testament to its far-reaching impact. Through humor, the sitcom often criticized capitalism and materialism, while also endorsing communality. This study examined the relationship between American sitcoms like* Seinfeld *and the recent rise in Marxist/socialist values among the millennial generation. It is hypothesized that sitcoms had a significant effect on their viewers, particularly in the realm of social class-consciousness and economic outlook. A literature review found emphasis on consumption and communality within the show, poor representation of accurate class structure in sitcoms, and a trend toward feelings of inequality as a result of cultivation theory.*

I. Introduction

   Seinfeld was a popular sitcom broadcast in the 1990s that continues to entertain countless people through syndication. The misadventures of Jerry, George, Elaine, and Kramer are as relatable as they are humorous, with Larry David's misanthropic take on life shining through in every episode. It has been subject to countless reviews, explorations, and critiques, which is a testament to its far-reaching impact and depth of content. A generation of American youths was raised watching *Seinfeld*, likely shaping the way they see the world around them. At its core, this study is meant to examine how the show has potentially influenced its viewers.

   The author asked questions pertaining to capitalist critiques within the show, the nature of sitcoms as a whole, and how television affects viewers on a broader scale. Synthesizing that information presents an idea of how *Seinfeld* may have had an impact on its audience and the nature of the millennial inclination toward socialism as an ideology.

II. Research Method

To better understand the relationship between American sitcoms and class-consciousness, the author conducted an extensive literature review, gathering information from multiple sources on four main subjects. Given the nebulous nature of the hypothesis, it made the most sense to use the wealth of previous academic journal articles that pertain to the subjects, rather than employing a content analysis of *Seinfeld* episodes. Similarly, not much valuable information could have been gleaned from surveys or interviews.

The articles were divided into four subjects: Marxism, sitcoms, Seinfeld, and cultivation theory. Several of the Marxism articles were primary sources, written by Karl Marx himself, or pieces on the significance of the philosophy in modern America. These articles served as an educational backbone, making it easier to understand the criticisms of capitalism that are embedded in the show. The articles on sitcoms mostly dealt with class representation throughout the history of television, and whether or not it truly reflected the nature of American social class. Articles about *Seinfeld* were either commentaries on the deeper messages found within the show, or pieces that broke down what cultural and historical events led the show to take place. Finally, the articles on cultivation theory serve as validation of the linking factor: determining if television affects how viewers feel about capitalism and consumption.

To gather source information that was as reputable as possible, this study consulted mostly academic journals. Most were accessed via the Elon online library database, using resources such as JSTOR, Routledge, and Statista. From there, the author used permutations of keywords like "Marxism," "Seinfeld," "social class," and "cultivation theory" to find congruent articles.

While this method was an efficient way to conduct the study, it was not without flaws. The lack of content analysis meant the show itself could not be directly evaluated for the themes in question. It would be certainly worthwhile to conduct a pure content analysis of *Seinfeld*, and pick through the show for capitalist criticisms.

III. Literature Review

Marxism

First, the current author reviewed Marxism, specifically the historical criticism of capitalism, and its echoes in America today. Historical writing on the subject abounds, with much of it coming from Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels themselves.

Marx and Engels' foremost text on the philosophy, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), describes the historic class structure that guides all societies: an oppressive minority controlling the subjugated majority. They describe these forces as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat respectively, and explain that there has always been and always will be class conflict until a kinder structure is achieved (pp. 14-21). In Marx's later work, particularly *Das Kapital vol. I*, he goes on to discuss the nature of commodity, labor, and value in the production process. This fundamental text exposes the holes in capitalism, an economic system that has remained nearly unchanged in America 150 years later (Marx, 1867). Most of Marx's writing revolves around these critiques, which he applies to various historical events and scenarios. For instance, his essay *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* explains the French coup of 1851 through a materialist lens (Marx, 1852).

Any society, government, or event can be analyzed through Marxism. The practice has long outlived Marx himself and is as useful now as it was in the 1800s. That said, it is important to consider how things have changed since then. There is a difference between the traditional Marxist proletariat and the new middle class. While they share some similar aspects, such as not owning any of the property they work for, needing a salary to survive, and working for reasons that don't relate directly to their home life, they are distinct (Barbalet, 1986, pg. 557). Although the proletariat did not rise up and overthrow the bourgeoisie in America, Marx's class theory still holds water with some tweaks. Despite the prevailing notion of America being a country with high economic mobility and general prosperity, the social classes are incredibly stratified (Manley, 2003, pg. 9). In a 2016 essay, James Parisot describes the concept of a capitalist empire, where capitalism does not just affect the economy. Instead, it also dictates the politics, ideology, gender/race roles, and overarching ecology of a country (Parisot, 2016, pg. 29). It is safe to say that America fits the bill.

Seinfeld

Seinfeld is a popular American sitcom that ran for nine seasons from 1989 to 1999 and has remained in syndication since 1995 (Armstrong, 2016). The four main characters in the show spend episodes dealing with inconsequential happenings and events, which prompted its famous description: "a show about nothing."

Although some call *Seinfeld* dangerously nihilistic, certain writers believe the show actually represented a trend toward more socially liberal values in the wake of the rigid conservatism of the 1980s (Olbrys, 2006). Other writers think the show's characters constantly struggle with the social expectations of the American middle class. In a way, it shares some aspects with British "comedies of manners," in that the main focus is on one's behavior and fitting in (Pierson, 2001, pp. 49-50). The characters are assaulted by cultural norms and expectations while constantly trying to avoid them, always consuming, buying, and using. *Seinfeld* subverted the rosy trend of other sitcoms: lessons are not learned and people do not change (Morreale, 2005). The characters in the show often act in their own self-interest, yet this is all bound together with a sense of communality (Ben-Shaul, 2000). Everyone is in it for themselves, but friends support one another's struggle to survive.

Sitcoms

After considering *Seinfeld* specifically, it becomes clear that the show is an outlier. To truly understand its place within the television environment, it is necessary to understand the traditional sitcom.

In American sitcoms immediately following World War II, there was the widespread concept that going to a menial, low-paying job every day meant your life would improve. Hard work would truly pay off (Watson, 2006, pg. 32). That has changed in recent years. While the working class is now barely represented in sitcoms, the current shows carry a different message. Sitcoms like *Roseanne* looked at the lower class as something to ascend from, but recent shows like *The Middle* treat poverty as a grim reality that will never be escaped (Grabowski, 2014, pg. 135). Paired with that, most sitcoms have bucked any real attachment to concepts of class. Characters live in big houses, experience no economic struggles, and never worry about their next paycheck; regardless of what job they hold (VanDerwerff, 2012). These "hangout shows" started with *Seinfeld* and become more and more popular over time. They feature groups of people with no clear economic or familial ties coasting through life, which ultimately creates a distorted perspective for viewers who expect the real world to function the same way (Morris, 2016).

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory is a mass communication theory that argues the link between heavy television viewership and altered worldviews (O'Guinn & Shrum, 1997). Particularly, American television has been shown to overemphasize affluence and the benefits of capitalism, typically highlighting material goods and wealth (Carlson, 1993). Luxury services and goods are typically considered to be much more prevalent than they actually are (Shrum, Burroughs, & Rindfleisch, 2005). As a result, this endorsement of capitalism and material wealth has had a negative effect on viewers. Audiences perceive larger gaps between their own social standing and others, which leads to unhappiness with economic inequality (Yang & Oliver, 2010, pp. 121-122).

With the prevalence of the internet today, people are subjected to cultivation theory not only from television, but also from all forms of new media. While it is not known specifically how the internet truly affects users' worldviews, it can be assumed that it is significant (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2015).

IV. Discussion

Based on what was discovered in the literature review, there is a possible, tenuous relationship between sitcoms like *Seinfeld* and the increase in socialist values among millennials. The show itself contains various messages that promote communality and deride materialism. Along with that, sitcoms may have created an inaccurate picture of life in America, leading to dissatisfaction with the current state of the social class. Finally, television viewership appears to be tied to awareness of economic inequality as a whole, which might be serving as a spur for these sociopolitical movements.

Marxist Undertones in Seinfeld

Seinfeld is a decidedly apolitical show. It makes few references to the politics or current events of its time, which likely contributes to its timelessness (Olbrys, 2006, pg. 391). However, specks of a message peek through. At its core, Marxism is a critique of capitalism, and there are several instances in the show when capitalism is painted in a harsh light.

The characters in the show are caught up in their own self-absorption. They constantly buy, consume, and show off (Pierson, 2001, pp. 50-51). But these actions are never glorified. They almost always result in disappointment or failure, leaving the characters right where they started. For example, in one episode George spends days guarding a suit in a store so he can buy the item when it goes on sale. But when he finally purchases the suit, he discovers that the pants make a whooshing sound. This small issue ultimately costs him a potential job (David, 1994b). Instead of leading to positive outcomes, George's greed and desire to buy results in a complete reversal of fortune. This story structure is repeated many times over the show's nine seasons; different characters pursue their own materialist goals, but are always penalized in the end. Consumption is not portrayed in a positive light within *Seinfeld*, to humorously absurd extents.

Although they all work toward their own interests, there is a tangible sense of communality within the show. While Jerry, George, Elaine, and Kramer are often at odds with one another, they form a support unit outside of the traditional familial structure (Olbrys, 2006, pg. 390). Take, for instance, Kramer's constant mooching from Jerry. Although it is meant to be comedic, there is an obvious communal relationship. Along with that, the core of the show's conflicts typically stems from the characters' desire to subvert cultural norms. They are not content to conform to the prevailing concepts of family or what is expected of an individual in their thirties. This could be seen as indicative of a broader progressive trend in America during the 1990s, but it was also a unique perspective to see on television (Olbrys, 2006, 392).

In summation, *Seinfeld* repeatedly criticizes capitalism and materialism, while also endorsing communality. The characters' obsession with consumption can be taken as a jab at the American experience, while their reliance on one another can be considered as support for a new system that embraces cooperation, rather than competition.

Social Class in American Sitcoms

Sitcoms have traditionally attempted to serve as a comedic reflection of the American experience. However, they have not always been accurate. While past decades saw a wider range of sitcoms from various economic classes, the scope of representation has shrunk consistently and significantly (Grabowski, 2014). Shows like *Good Times* (1974-1979), which focused on working-class families struggling to stay above water, have been all but eliminated. Poverty is largely glazed over on television, even though it remains a grim reality for a significant proportion of Americans. The few of these shows that exist currently have a different message than they did in the past. Instead of touting the power of hard work and America's social mobility, they have taken a more fatalist tone. Poverty is declared inescapable, and working-class characters are encouraged to accept that their situations will never improve (Watson, 2006, pg. 39). This attitude says a lot about America's current economic climate. The promise of the American dream has been replaced with lowered expectations. The government and media seem to largely ignore working-class families, which make up an increasing proportion of the American population ("American Middle Class," 2015). These people are getting less and less representation on television, which can only serve to make them feel more out of place and irrelevant.

Seinfeld served as a catalyst for another important trend in sitcoms over the past few decades. Along with the disappearance of the working class came the distortion of the middle class. Likely due to the popularity of *Seinfeld*'s breezy, economically carefree atmosphere, more and more sitcoms began to feature characters that live in worlds where money is no issue, regardless of income or profession (Morris, 2016). *Cheers* and *Friends* are two prime examples. Writers realized that removing the real-world stress of making ends meet usually made for shows that were easier to watch, despite being unrealistic portrayals of American life. The concept is attractive to viewers: worlds where money is no issue. However, this creates a mindset that is not reflective of reality. An individual who only watched sitcoms before venturing off into the world on their own would be incredibly surprised to find that life is not as simple as it is on *Seinfeld*. The interpersonal issues surely exist, but so do money problems. It is possible that the generation that grew up watching shows like *Seinfeld* feel cheated. They were fed a vision that does not exist, and now they want to rectify that.

Youth Socialism and Cultivation Theory

The American political landscape has been changing fast in recent years. Specifically, young people are showing the signs of creating a major shift. Study after study has shown millennials are subverting the trends of generations before them. The marriage rate has been steadily plummeting since the early 1990s, indicating a change from the traditional familial structure that dominated past decades (NCHS, 2016). Millennials are not worried about buying a house either, with nearly 25% not expecting it within five years (*USA Today*, 2017). Most importantly, they are more socialist than any other generation or age group. In 2016, 33% of millennials support socialism as a personal sociopolitical ideology (Harvard Institute of Politics, 2016). Furthermore, 45% supported Bernie Sanders in the 2016 presidential election (Loesche, 2016).

So where is this groundswell of youth socialist values coming from? Television might be the answer. Historically, television has had a tremendous effect on viewers' perception of affluence and material wealth. One study from the early 1990s found that heavy television viewing increased audiences' perception of American affluence and their support for capitalism, but that appears to have changed in recent years (Carlson, 1993, pg. 243). A 2010 study shows that watching television ultimately decreases life satisfaction and highlights economic inequality (Yang & Oliver, 2010). This is a major shift.

It is not easy to say whether or not it has contributed to millennial socialist values, but it cannot be discounted as a factor. Maybe sitcoms have provided young people with an image of American life that is not at all accurate, and they feel swindled. Socialism could be an attempt to level the playing field somewhat for all American families, with the goal of everyone being able to experience the stress-free fantasy of Jerry, George, Elaine, and Kramer.

Limitations of Research and Future Suggestions

As stated earlier, this study is not meant to be a content analysis. It is an extensive literature review that seeks to make conclusions based on previous writing on the subject. As such, not much space is devoted to specific examples of socialist values that might be present in the show. A study based on that particular goal would be a valuable addition to this study and could support the findings.

V. Conclusion

This study sought to understand the connections between the growing support for socialism among the millennial generation and American sitcoms like *Seinfeld*. The show has hints of capitalist critiques, namely the denigration of consumerism along with an emphasis on communality as the correct path. The portrayal of social class not only in *Seinfeld*, but also in many sitcoms is contrary to the actual nature of class in America. They glaze over issues of poverty and income with the intent to provide a more comfortable viewing experience, distorting the reality that all Americans face. Lastly, it is shown that television viewing affects audiences significantly, often leading to dissatisfaction with affluence and equality. Television could easily be a facilitator of the growing push for socialism in America, with more and more Americans becoming fed up with the current capitalist ecosystem.

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An Analysis of Bipolar Disorder Stereotypes
in 21st Century Television Programming

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Abstract

Television has recently received praise for portraying bipolar protagonists who defy stereotypes commonly associated with mental illness. Through a content analysis, the author coded one season of six television shows based on the presence of five stereotypes. The author sought to determine the prevalence, frequency, and accuracy of negative bipolar disorder stereotypes in contemporary TV dramas. Overall, the television programs portrayed violence and criminal behavior relatively inaccurately, while depicting professional competence, medical noncompliance, and the absence of instantaneous recovery more accurately. Despite recent progress, contemporary bipolar protagonists still have progress to make before depictions can be classified as wholly realistic.

I. Introduction

Since 1985, more than 150 prime-time television programs have featured mentally ill protagonists, secondary characters or antagonists (Wahl, 1995). Mainstream entertainment has long had difficulty depicting mental illness without falling into stereotypes and unflattering portrayals. With support from classic and contemporary crime dramas blaming mental disorders on the actions of murderers, molesters, ego-maniacs, and other obvious antagonists in films, such as *Halloween (1978)* and *Fatal Attraction (1987)*, these unflattering stereotypes have survived decades and permeated public opinion (Angermeyer & Dietrich, 2006). As recently as 2006, most people were unable to differentiate between drastically different mental disorders such as bipolar disorder, depression, and schizophrenia (Angermeyer & Dietrich, 2006). The truth is that mental disorders are not a one-size-fits-all illness. Different individuals with different mental makeups and different experiences express unique symptoms, behavioral tendencies, and diagnoses.

As society continues to progress and more information about disorders rises to the surface of public knowledge, today's society has seen a change in the way writers characterize the fictionalized mentally ill, especially through contemporary programming. Television dramas, such as *Homeland*, *Empire*, and *Shameless*, have all recently been praised for depicting bipolar protagonists who defy traditionally violent, dangerous, and socially inept characterizations.

In response to a recent surge in bipolar protagonists in television, this paper examined the accuracy

of bipolar characterizations, the prevalence of common bipolar disorder stereotypes, and whether or not recent shifts in public opinion have translated to the small screen. This paper investigated if recent television has truly achieved realistic portrayals of bipolar characters.

II. Literature Review

The literature below defined bipolar disorder, examined the symptoms, stereotypes, and misconceptions associated with bipolar disorder, and provided a history of the depiction of mental illness on television. This paper also reviewed literature on theories relevant to mental illness while examining the influence of entertainment on public opinion, especially regarding understanding bipolar sufferers.

Bipolar Disorder Defined

According to the National Institute of Public Health, bipolar disorder is a brain disorder that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks. Bipolar I affects approximately 1.5% of the population and is defined by a history of mania and depression (Mansell, Powell, Pedley, Thomas, & Jones, 2010). Symptoms associated with the disorder include manic, high, jumpy, impulsive, and unusually energetic episodes that last seven days, offset by episodes of intense depression. Stereotypes commonly associated with bipolar disorder include dangerous and violent behaviors directed toward strangers (Wahl, 1995), the tendency to commit crimes, anti-social behavior, poor socioeconomic status (Parrott & Parrott, 2015), professional incompetence, and an unwillingness to accept treatment (White, 2015). For this paper, the current author defined negative stereotypes as depicting actions unproductive to the growth and development of society.

A Brief History of Bipolar Disorder on the Small Screen

From *Guiding Light* to *Knots Landing* to *Lady Dynamite* and *Hill Street Blues*, mental illness in 20th and 21st century television hit every genre as the general public's fascination and awareness of mental illness increased. A 1979 study of daytime soaps even concluded that psychiatric illness was the "number one health-related problem in the soap opera world" (Wahl, 1995). As time progressed, mentally ill characters became especially prominent throughout U.S. crime dramas, encompassing 983 characters in three years, while, unfortunately, pushing violent and crime-related stereotypes (Parrott & Parrott, 2015).

While characters in 20th century television exhibited a range of mental health disorders, bipolar characters specifically weren't introduced to the small screen until the early 2000s. Since then, at least 16 television shows have incorporated bipolar characters, including 6 analyzed in this paper: *ER*, *Degrassi*, *Friday Night Lights*, *Homeland*, *Shameless,* and *Empire*. According to members of the general public, mental health sufferers, and trained professionals, these shows land on varying parts of the stereotypical spectrum.

Identifying Realistic Portrayals & Mental Health Misconceptions

What makes a depiction stereotypical? What's perceived as realistic according to public and professional opinions? While little is discussed about last century's portrayal of mentally ill television characters, individuals have analyzed modern television programming thoroughly, particularly *Homeland*, an hour-long drama featuring a female protagonist with bipolar disorder. One article lists realistic symptoms of the disorder exemplified in the series, including major depressive episodes, manic episodes, and professional competence, while listing stereotypical and unrealistic depictions largely absent from *Homeland*'s characterizations, including being only happy or sad at any given moment (Sifferlin, 2013). In contrast, some sources critique *Homeland*'s portrayal, believing Carrie's behavior to be unrealistic as she acts overtly manic and depressive even when taking prescribed medication (Sheff, 2013). Another example of breaking stereotypes is Andre Lyon's character throughout *Empire*, a protagonist shown managing his disorder through medication (Clarke, 2016), while maintaining a job and "functioning at a very high level" (White, 2015, para. 5). This comes as a stark contrast from the overplayed and often unrealistic depiction of bipolar patients as professionally incompetent, unable to maintain jobs, or experience work-related success.

Debunking the Stereotype

Stereotypes are more than just behavioral inaccuracies; they extend to gender roles and the expectations associated with male and female labels. Society expects men to exhibit stoicism, decisiveness, independence, and strength, regardless of any diagnosed mental health problem (Moss-Racusin & Miller, 2016). This differs from the reality of these disorders in which its sufferers, both male and female, have little control over mental faculties or emotional changes. Today's society also stereotypes people with mental illnesses as frequently exhibiting criminal behavior. In reality, less than 30% of bipolar patients self-reported criminal behavior over the last few years (Swann et al., 2011).

Another misconception is that patients frequently refuse treatment. Once that treatment is finally acquired, some also believe patients recover instantaneously. One patient analyzed his experience in a scientific journal, attributing his ability to manage symptoms through a long-term, ongoing relationship with a reliable and emotionally empathetic psychiatrist (Axer, 2014). This debunks any characterization of a bipolar character who takes a pill, or seeks some type of treatment, and recovers immediately. It's widely accepted by medical professionals that individuals with bipolar disorder may learn to cope, although it's unlikely individuals will recover completely (Chesanow, 2014). Additionally, it's been proven and supported by a number of anecdotal studies that patients experience the best results through a combination of factors, such as medication, routine, and social support (Mansell et al., 2010).

Bipolar sufferers are also more likely to succeed professionally than most classic films and horror flicks lead someone to believe. The majority of individuals suffering from a mental illness are professionally successful and happily employed (Stang, Frank, Yood, Wells, & Burch, 2007). Additionally, most who suffer from bipolar disorder tend to express themselves creatively, especially during a manic episode (Tremblay, Grosskopf, & Yang, 2010). Other stereotypes commonly depicted in media include hyper sexuality (Rodriguez, 2009), and difficulty with long-term relationships (Roberts, 2007).

The most common stereotype associated with mental disorders in general, bipolar disorder included, is that sufferers are dangerous and violent. According to psychologists who've studied the depiction of mental health on both the large and small screen, the vast majority of patients are neither violent nor dangerous (Vann, 2016), and when it does occur, violence is seldom directed toward strangers (Wahl, 1995). Were this concept widely understood, it's likely media depictions of the mentally ill would be far different.

Public Opinion: Now & Then

Society's outlook on mental health has progressed over the past decade, according to comparisons of research dating back to 2006. As previously discussed, in 2006 a large percentage of the general public sampled, albeit in Europe, could not differentiate between specific mental disorders. They viewed the mentally ill as dangerous and unpredictable. Studies also indicated that awareness of bipolar disorder in 2006 was significantly lower than awareness of depression, schizophrenia, and other mental health disorders (Ellison, Mason, & Scior, 2015). There's little research about contemporary attitudes toward bipolar disorder specifically, but in comparison to 2009, more individuals knew someone with a mental health disorder (5% increase) and more would be willing to work with someone who has a mental illness (5% increase), according to the Department of Health. Nevertheless, over a third of those questioned still associate mental health problems with violent tendencies.

Relevant theories

Normative theory seeks to define what is ethical, just, or correct (Ellison et al., 2015). Most health professionals, media experts, and individuals who've experienced mental problems firsthand agree that positive media depictions, or depictions that present bipolar characters as productive members of society, are more ethical than portrayals that paint bipolar sufferers as violent, dangerous, and unproductive. Television shows characterizing the mentally ill as the latter are defined as negative characterizations.

Pescosolido, Martin, Lang, and Olafsdottir (2008) sought to define the role of media based on Wahl's study, "establishing predominantly societal templates for responses to persons with mental illness" (p. 433). In other words, information surrounding mental health learned from a lifetime of media use and television programming is often the source of societal stereotypes. According to this theory, real-life experience aligned with television messaging significantly increases the message's impact on viewers. That applies to both positive and negative messaging.

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

RQ1: Does the contemporary television drama exaggerate stereotypes of bipolar disorder?

RQ2: Are television depictions of bipolar disorder considered accurate in comparison with research and testimonials from medical professionals?

RQ3: Has the depiction of bipolar disorder on television improved in accuracy and become increasingly positive since popular attitudes toward mental illness have changed over the past few years?

III. Methods

This content analysis was adopted to identify stereotypical portrayals of bipolar disorder throughout television dramas over the past decade. Content analysis is a type of research methods at the intersection of the qualitative and quantitative traditions (Duriau, Reger, & Pfarrer, 2007), an ideal method to study qualitative television program quantitatively. The method was adapted from studies by Pirkis, Blood, Francis, and McCallum (2006) and DeMare (2016).

Based on research regarding mental health and indicating a change in public opinion, the author was able to quantitatively measure how bipolar characters have been portrayed in 21st century television. Six television shows were chosen for this analysis, all depicting a bipolar protagonist or bipolar sub-character. These six were drawn from lists outlining the best and worst depictions of bipolar disorder and examples of bipolar disorder in contemporary television: *ER*, *Degrassi, Friday Night Lights*, *Homeland*, *Shameless*, and *Empire* (Clarke, 2016). These shows were the only programming available to the author at the time research was conducted. These six television shows also exist within the same genre and feature characters with similar minutes of screen time per season.

After recording the character's age, gender, and race, each television show was evaluated for five stereotypes: professional incompetence, violent behavior, criminal behavior, medical noncompliance, and instantaneous recovery after treatment. Some of these stereotypes came from literature directly outlining inaccuracies in the portrayal of bipolar disorder on television (Sheff, 2013). However, because academic research on media depictions of bipolar disorder is limited, and appearances of bipolar characters on television were less frequent than characters depicted as depressed or schizophrenic, these bipolar stereotypes fall under a broader category of general mental health stereotypes.

These stereotypes had to be defined for accurate categorization of television programming. *Professional incompetence* was defined by the author as a character's inability to maintain a steady job or successfully complete work-related tasks at a level comparable to co-workers. *Violence* occurred anytime the bipolar character acted to harm another character physically, or disrupted space and objects with his or her aggressive actions (DeMare, 2016, p. 28). *Criminal behavior* was defined as any behavior that broke the law or elicited police intervention. *Medical noncompliance* was defined as an instance where the character refused to accept or engage with the provided treatment either in the form of medicine or counseling services, and (Chesanow, 2014). Medical noncompliance occurs after more than one instance of refusing medicinal or therapeutic treatment, because it is realistic for most with a mental disorder to go through periods of medical noncompliance. *Instantaneous Recovery* is self-explanatory. Once the character began treatment, his or her symptoms disappeared, never to be seen again throughout the character's developmental arc (Mansell et al., 2010).

While coding the six television dramas, the author checked each character's age, gender, and race, and counted the instances of violence and criminal behavior. The author also determined whether or not an unwillingness to accept treatment and/or instantaneous recovery after treatment was present. This content analysis successfully answered RQ1. To answer RQ2, the author compared statistics and testimonials from medical professionals with television characterizations.

To answer RQ3, the author determined whether more "positive" behaviors were present throughout television premiering within the last few years, like even in 2009, when society has a greater understanding of mental illness and an increased willingness to accept those with a diagnosed mental disorder (Angermeyer & Dietrich, 2006). As discussed in the literature review, positive behavior is defined as behavior that allows for

productive contributions to society, such as professional success and clean criminal records.

          The author also coded whether or not a given stereotype was included at all throughout a television show's season. The study analyzed the entire season of a television show in which a character's bipolar disorder was first introduced. If the disorder was formally introduced in the last episode of a season, the next three episodes of the following season were analyzed to accurately determine whether the character experienced instantaneous recovery or medical noncompliance. This study examined season seven of *ER*, season four of *Degrassi*, season one of *Friday Night Lights*, season one of *Homeland*, season four of *Shameless*, and season one of *Empire*.

IV. Findings

Violence and criminal behavior

Violence: Based on the analysis of the six television programs featuring a bipolar character, the author tallied the frequency of violence as well as the frequency of criminal behavior, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Violence and criminal behavior in six different television shows

Television show	Season's release year	Instances of violence	Instances of criminal behavior
ER	2000	3	2
Degrassi	2004-2005	4	1
Friday Night Lights	2007	0	0
Homeland	2011	1	4
Shameless	2014	4	3
Empire	2015	4	1
Average		2.7	1.8

          Violent activity was depicted more frequently than criminal behavior in television shows with an average of almost three instances of violence per season. Five out of six characters acted violently in a given season while four out of six characters acted violently at least three times. Additionally, male characters represented in *Degrassi*, *Shameless*, and *Empire* acted violently an average of four times per season, while female characters, represented in *ER* and *Homeland,* acted violently three times and one time each per season, respectively. Most instances of violence throughout all of the television shows, save for *ER*, incorporated at least one instance in which bipolar characters provoked violence among themselves.

          Criminal Behavior: It was presented less frequently than violence, with an average of barely two instances per season. Nevertheless, five out of six characters engaged in criminal activity, and half of the characters studied broke the law more than twice in his or her season. It should be noted that every character broke moral codes or was involved in petty crimes if not federal law. While Waverly from *Friday Night Lights* was technically engaged in criminal behavior zero times, in episode 16 she crept into her boyfriend's home and into his bedroom late at night, an action uncharacteristic of the good girl she was initially portrayed as, and an action that certainly broke the house rules of her boyfriend's strict mother. Following her impromptu break-in, she crept two people into a public pool after-hours, an action that likely broke community rules as well. On the criminally intense side of the spectrum, Maggie's character throughout *ER* attempted to steal twice; Craig's character from *Degrassi* stole his guardian's credit card; and Ian's character from *Shameless* stole his brother's identity to enlist in the military, attempted to steal government property, damaged an old boyfriend's apartment, and robbed a former client. The first two of Ian's actions were explained simultaneously and occurred off-screen, so they counted as one instance. Carrie from *Homeland* broke federal law by organizing an unauthorized surveillance of a suspected terrorist, failed to disclose her illness to employers, trespassed on private property, and pressured her sister into using her pharmaceutical license to provide

Carrie with samples of medication. Finally, Andre from *Empire* broke the law when he covered up a murder near the end of season one.

Professional Incompetence and Medical Treatment

Most characters experienced one or two instances of professional or academic incompetence, probably used by writers as a tool to further dramatic tension (Wahl, 1995). As shown in Table 2, three out of six characters were depicted as incompetent, either professionally or academically.

Table 2: Instances of five stereotypes in six television shows

Television show	Age	Gender	Race	Professional incompetence	Medical Noncompliance	Instantaneous Recovery
ER	60s	Female	Caucasian	Yes	Yes	No
Degrassi	Teens	Male	Caucasian	No	No	No
Friday Night Lights	Teens	Female	African American	No	No	No
Homeland	30s	Female	Caucasian	Yes	Yes	No
Shameless	20s	Male	Caucasian	Yes	Yes	No
Empire	30s	Male	African American	No	Yes	No

Some instances happened due to their bipolar disorder. Craig's character in *Degrassi* claimed to have written 14 songs in two days amid a manic episode. Waverly's character in *Friday Night Lights* recited an entire poem from memory amid a manic episode while Carrie's bipolar disorder in *Homeland* helped her crack open a case. Amid a manic episode, she stayed awake frantically charting a suspect's timeline using a meticulous, detail-oriented method. In one instance, her professional incompetence was portrayed when she entered a meeting and her boss announced, in front of the entire room, "Why are you the only one who can't get to a briefing on time?" This instance singled her character out as less competent than co-workers. Andre from *Empire* was the most intelligent of his musical family, having attended an Ivy League college with a spectacular business program. He also worked diligently to manage the financial deals of the family business, and his professional and academic competence was never explicitly linked to his mental illness. Among the characters in these six television programs, five out of six were considered either employed or full-time students.

Medical Noncompliance: It appeared frequently throughout all six television shows. Four out of six characters were depicted refusing treatment in the form of either medicine, counseling, hospitalization, or all three. Craig's character in Degrassi was not shown refusing treatment in the season, but he briefly went off his medication in the following season while his bipolar disorder was introduced. Only Maggie in *ER*, and Ian in *Shameless* faced either consistent problems with medical noncompliance, or, like Ian's case, refused to accept a diagnosis and consequently refused all forms of treatment.

Instantaneous Recovery: No television show depicted a bipolar character instantaneously recovered after receiving some form of treatment. All characters were shown experiencing mood improvement after beginning treatment or returning to treatment after a break from medication, but for each and every character their recovery process was shown in length and never appeared quick and easy.

Other Findings

Findings not listed in the current author's initial tables but found repeatedly upon coding included sexual promiscuity and a strain on important familial or romantic relationships. Every season tasked with characterizing a person with bipolar disorder, save for *ER*, incorporated an instance where the character felt frequently sexually aroused or used sex as a means of persuasion.

V. Discussion

This section compared the above findings with information from medical experts to determine how realistic these characterizations were. If the characterizations were congruent with cited statistics, circumstances, and personal anecdotes, the characterizations were considered accurate.

Instances of violence among bipolar characters were frequent, and viewers might perceive violent behavior as common among sufferers of bipolar disorder. In reality, only 11% to 16% of bipolar patients actually experience violent episodes (Vann, 2010). Additionally, those who experience violent episodes typically abuse drugs and alcohol which, coupled with extreme mood swings, does realistically prompt violent behavior (Wahl, 1995). Of the five characters presented acting violently, only two were seen abusing substances and neither abused the substance before their violent episodes, again decreasing the depiction's realism. Because violent episodes occurred so frequently, regardless of circumstances that prompted the character's violence, these negative depictions of violence were classified as inaccurate.

It's interesting that male characters were portrayed acting more violently than female characters. Men are often perceived as more violent but, in reality, both men and women are mild mannered when mentally well, but act aggressively, violently, and dangerously toward themselves and others when bipolar symptoms arise (Moss-Racusin & Miller, 2016).

Criminal behavior was presented frequently, more so in programming premiered in the last five years. According to a recent study examining the correlation between criminal behavior and bipolar disorder, Swann et al. (2011) found that just 29 out of 112 bipolar participants self-reported criminal behavior or conviction, a mere 25.6%. When compared with findings in this study revealing characters who frequently exhibited criminal behavior, Swann and others' study may suggest that television dramas use exaggeration in contemporary dramas. While this conclusion may not be entirely inaccurate, the author noted that criminal activity appeared frequently in *Homeland* because of the nature of protagonist Carrie's profession. Oftentimes, fulfilling her duties within national security while ignoring a superior officer who disregarded her often correct professional hunches, meant breaking the law. In the case of Carrie, her criminal activity actually hid another stereotype associated with bipolar disorder: professional incompetence.

In terms of professional and academic incompetence, the television shows depicted realistic images of bipolar sufferers. Five out of six characters were considered either employed or full-time students, which accurately reflects the 17% of bipolar patients who face unemployment due to their emotional disability (Stang et al., 2007). Those with bipolar illness also appear to be disproportionately concentrated in the most creative occupational category with a higher likelihood of engaging in creative activities on the job (Tremblay et al., 2010). Tremblay's analysis aligns with the depiction of Craig's musical competence, Waverly's attraction to creative poetry, and Carrie's colorful and creative method of solving the case.

Additionally, a large number of creatively successful people have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, including Catherine Zeta-Jones, Sinead O'Connor, Jane Pauley, Patty Duke, and Amy Winehouse, again matching Degrassi's depiction of a bipolar musical success. Examples of successful corporate professionals with the disorder include Philip Graham; Ted Turner, founder of CNN; and Mark Whitacre. An emphasis on professionally driven bipolar protagonists supports the image of bipolar patients as potentially successful despite mental inhibitions.

This category wasn't coded quantitatively, but it's clear most programming strayed from the negative stereotype of depicting bipolar sufferers as unemployed and professionally unsuccessful. The two shows depicting academically and professionally unstable sufferers appeared in both 2000 and 2014, preventing any solid conclusion about the difference between dramas premiering in the early 2000s and dramas premiering in more recently.

One of the last categories was coded for a character's willingness to accept treatment. Realistically, three-quarters of patients prescribed psychotropic medications will discontinue over the course of a year, meaning medical noncompliance is common and the presence of said noncompliance on television isn't always inaccurate (Arauz, 2014). But this study examined negative stereotypes; and a negative stereotype present in society is that mentally ill people frequently refuse treatment. In reality, people with bipolar disorder want their mental health to improve, and although limited options and the disorder itself sometimes deter patients from traditional forms of treatment, it doesn't mean that most avoid treatment altogether. In other words, more in-depth analysis would tell the whole story. For instance, on both *Empire* and *Shameless*,

characters refused full treatment options for the sake of their professional lives. Carrie was hesitant to inform her superiors about her medical diagnosis for fear of termination while, *Empire's* Andre stopped forms of treatment because his focus on work pushed everything else, including mental health, family values, and interpersonal relationships, lower on his priority list. In a way, these two examples reinforced a positive stereotype about bipolar disorder and a strong work ethic.

Surprisingly, no television show depicted instantaneous recovery, which indicates that programming, since the introduction of openly bipolar protagonists, has rarely succumbed to this particular misconception. Each show lets the character's symptoms unfold throughout the course of a season, an improvement from any plotline forcing a character's diagnosis to act as a solution to a crime, mystery, or unanswered and muddled narrative plot points.

In terms of the realism of sexual promiscuity and a strain on familial or romantic relationships, hyper sexuality affects between 25% and 80% of all patients with mania, so this representation, while not necessarily considered a positive depiction, is fairly accurate (Rodriguez, 2009). Regarding strained relationships, it's normal for relationships to suffer when a mental illness, or any illness for that matter, is introduced. Given that 90% of marriages involving someone with bipolar disorder reportedly fail, this representation is also accurate (Roberts, 2007).

To improve the accuracy of this study, the sample of television programs would need to increase. This study incorporated only six programs because television shows has rarely depicted a bipolar character over the last 20 years. Future researchers may expand the content examined and limit the stereotypes to one to learn more about each individual. The context of a character's actions, aside from their mental illness as a characterization, plays a large role in explaining why a character does what he or she does, something that quantitative analyses might overlook.

VI. Conclusion

This study sought to identify the prevalence of negative bipolar disorder stereotypes in the contemporary television drama. This study also aimed to discern whether depictions of bipolar disorder and the stereotypes differ as programming has progressed through time within the 21st century.

The analysis showed that television shows depicting bipolar characters have somewhat exaggerated stereotypes commonly associated with bipolar disorder. All shows collectively hit on almost every stereotype at least once and, in general, television depicted violent and criminal behavior far too often. Combined with contexts that frequently failed to support the reasoning behind both behaviors, these portrayals were considered inaccurate. On the flip side, professional incompetence, an unwillingness to accept treatment, and instantaneous recovery were all portrayed more accurately. Aligning with professional opinions and understandings of bipolar disorder, the majority of characters were either employed or academically successful students. Also, no character recovered immediately upon beginning treatment of some sort. While medical noncompliance was classified as a negative stereotype for the purposes of this study, it's accurate that most patients will go off a prescribed psychotropic medication at least once in their lifetime (Arauz, 2014).

Aside from more recent programming incorporating a slightly higher frequency of negative stereotypes, the depictions among all television shows generally appeared similar. The number of instances of negative stereotyping wasn't dramatically different and, aside from *Friday Night Lights*, no television show appeared drastically different throughout, as shown by data in tables 1 and 2. In general, a television show incorporated more instances of violent behavior than criminal activities, except for *Homeland*.

Although the size of data isn't large, it indicates that programming is not as stereotypical, under-researched or inaccurate, given the number of both accurate and positive behaviors presented. Nevertheless, as public opinion of mental health has become increasingly positive, television programming has not necessarily improved in its removal of negative behaviors and incorporation of positive behaviors. It should be noted, however, that positive attitudes toward those with mental illnesses have not increased by a significant percentage over the past 20 years (Ellison et al., 2015). Therefore, it may take several more years and a greater understanding of mental illness before a positive and well-educated attitude is thoroughly reflected on screen.

People naturally desire to be understood, treated with respect, and provided equal opportunity both personally and professionally (Pescosolido et al., 2008). As time continues to progress and the media

continues to alter society's perception of mental illness, these portrayals must continue to improve in accuracy for the sake of both sufferers and society at large.

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The Rise of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Lifestyle Branding: A Case Study of Lucie Fink

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Abstract

Influencer marketing, the process of identifying, engaging and supporting individuals who create conversations with a brand's customers, is a growing trend used in public relations initiatives. In recent years, this strategy has become predominantly centered around social media, creating an opportunity for brands to market through social media influencers. To investigate this phenomenon, the author conducted pentadic analysis as well as qualitative content analyses of posts by social media influencers. Findings revealed that the use of social media influencer marketing in public relations initiatives has broken the wall between the consumer and the brand, changing the way the two interact.

I. Introduction

According to Forbes, influencer marketing can be defined as a form of marketing in which focus is placed on specific key individuals rather than the target market as a whole (Forbes.com). Traditionally, when people think of influencer marketing, they think of a celebrity appearance in a TV commercial or a famous person posed on a billboard along a highway. Companies hope that by showcasing people of interest to their target markets, consumers will be more inclined to try the product or service that the company offers.

As media and technology have become more advanced, companies can choose from a range of options in outlets to market their products. These options have also led to the evolution of social media influencer marketing. Now you can find people representing companies through branded content on personal social media accounts, such as Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and YouTube. More than ever, consumers are looking to fellow consumers to inform their purchasing decisions.

The rise of social media has opened up a new channel for brands to connect with consumers more directly and more organically. If a brand is not using social media influencer marketing as a strategy to better attract its target audience, now may be the time for the company to start evaluating their advertising strategy. Social media brand influencers are on the rise, becoming one of the biggest marketing and public relations trends of 2017, especially those who promote lifestyle brands. Lifestyle influencers focus on working with companies whose products non-celebrity individuals use in their everyday lives. By working alongside social media influencers, public relations agencies can capture the attention of brand consumers and promote relevant and relatable content to clients. While influencer marketing based on traditional media has been used

in public relations for many years, the rise of social media has created the boom of social media influencer marketing. Social media influencer marketing has successfully changed the way that brands interact with consumers, especially in regard to lifestyle branding.

This study examined what strategies have made influencer marketing such a successful public relations tool and how the use of social media has allowed brands and consumers to connect on a more personal level.

II. Literature Review

Influencer marketing incorporating social media is a new phenomenon within the industry. Due to the constantly evolving and changing market, this topic has been widely discussed by contemporary media, but not enough by scholarly researchers. The literature review covered the identification of social media influencers, their importance and impact on brands, and the strategic planning they employed while communicating with consumers. To include an analysis of the latest techniques used by social media influencers in their marketing, this study reviewed trade publications and news articles as well as traditional academic sources.

Who Are Social Media Influencers?

Social media influencers represent a new type of independent, third-party endorsers who shape an audience's attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media channels (Fredberg, 3). Through sites like Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, social media influencers create content promoting certain brands with the goal of obtaining a following and brand recognition.

According to Fredberg, the success of social media influencers is vitally important to brands; therefore, technology has been developed to identify and track influencers' relevance to a brand or organization. This technology tracks the number of hits on a blog, times a blog is shared, likes and comments, and followers. All of these points are pivotal aspects of a social media influencer's success (Fredberg, 3).

Influencer marketing on social media opens up a new channel for brands to connect with consumers more directly, organically, and at scale to their everyday lives (Adweek). Social media influencers promote brands through their personal lives, making them relatable to the average consumer. According to Ledbetter, "When a party attempts to influence another to take specific actions, a dynamic ensues that can change the course and content of their relationship" (Ledbetter, 3). Influencers truly serve as the ultimate connection between a brand and a consumer. Through their candidness and openness with consumers, influencers have high social clout and credibility (Buyer, 2016), which is what makes the phenomenon so successful. Where traditional marketing targeted mostly mass audiences, influencers have the unique ability to target niche audiences that have until now been unreachable (Ledbetter).

Influencers' Impact on the Brand

Brands have always had a focus on targeting their consumers' wants and needs. The image a brand gains from its social media influencers helps build direct relationships with its key consumers and encourages brand loyalty. While a brand does not have total control over its online conversation, the direct voice of an influencer and trust that consumers have for this individual is instilled in the brand through the two-way conversation that is established for the product via social media outlets (Booth and Matic, 3).

Social media tools are becoming more valuable and one of the core elements of a communication strategy in an average consumer's life. According to Gillin, there are a wide range of factors that cause influencer marketing to become increasingly popular. These factors range from difficult-to-measure criteria, such as "quality of content," to highly measureable factors including page views and search engine rank. With media platforms rapidly improving, these criteria are bound to change. In addition, other criteria for evaluating influence include participation level, frequency of activity, and prominence in the market or community (Booth and Matic, 3). In terms of goals on the influencer's side, social media influencers work to enhance relationships with key audiences by improving the reputation of the business/brand, driving customer awareness on their online activities, and soliciting customers' comments and feedback (Booth and Matic, 3).

Theories Behind Influencer Communication

Bandura, the social-science theorist responsible for much of our understanding of how people react in social situations, wrote, "In the social learning system, new patterns of behavior can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the behaviors of others (Bandura, 3). This explanation can help one understand why influencers are so "influential." Bandura explained, "On the basis of informative feedback, they (consumers) develop thoughts or hypotheses about the types of behavior most likely to succeed. These hypotheses then serve as guides for future actions" (3). To put this into simpler terms, people learn from example, and influencers lead by example for those who "follow" them. By observing examples through social media, people are more likely to adopt the behaviors exhibited by the influencer (Forbes, 2016). Companies are using their resources via social media influencers in hopes that the experience that a consumer has with an influencer allows the behavior of the influencer to be adopted, that is, copied by the consumer (Forbes).

In addition to Bandura's social learning theory, Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) can help one better understand the strategies that make social media influencers so successful. eWOM refers to any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, and former customers about a product or company via the internet. eWOM encourages consumers to share their opinions with other consumers. Word of mouth is known to be one of the most credible and trusted sources of marketing. Social media influencers are masters at eWOM. Social media influencers take on the role of forming consumers' opinions on products and services. That said, it is in the interest of the company as well as the influencer to keep online conversations positive and persuade other consumers to try products in a way that makes it feel as if the decision to make the purchase was in the interest of the consumer as opposed to the persuasion of the influencer (Lee and Youn, 473-475).

Researchers have studied who social media influencers are, their impact on the brand, and the strategic planning behind their communication with consumers, but not much on how influential these people might be. This study conducted qualitative analyses to discover how these social media influencers have become so successful and why influencer marketing is the fastest growing and most popular tactic in public relations today.

This research addressed the following two research questions and set up one hypothesis:

RQ1: What makes a social media influencer successful?

RQ2: Do companies view social media influencers as positive or negative to their companies?

H1: Social media influencer marketing has successfully changed the way that brands interact with consumers.

III. Methods

To answer the two research questions and test this hypothesis, the author gathered examples of influencer marketing from Instagram and YouTube and examined these media forms. Two types of analysis were performed.

The first was a pentadic analysis, which looked at Instagram to examine the strategies that influencers appear to use when posting content. A pentadic analysis considers the act, agent, agency, scene, and purpose of a media artifact. The act tells what happened; the agent performed the act, the tools/means an agent used to perform the act; the scene provides context for the act; and the purpose explains why the event occurred. This provides an opportunity for the researcher to begin to understand what goes through social media influencers' minds when they create an Instagram post. The analysis can also reveal what appears to be the motives behind the posts of influencer marketers.

The second method employed was a content analysis of YouTube videos to examine how social media influencers engage with their audience members as well as the techniques that they appear to use to advertise via YouTube. In order to conduct this qualitative content analysis, the author analyzed videos based on three characteristics that were determined to be important based on previous research: confidence, interactivity, and authenticity (Bandura, 4). In terms of social media influencers, these characteristics mean:

- **Confidence**: When influencers trust their own-self and assures not only themselves but also their viewers of their abilities.
- **Authenticity**: The influencer is genuine and relatable with their followers.
- **Interactivity**: The influencer works together with the viewer to solicit feedback.

Overall, social media influencers post content on some form of social media and use similar strategies to distribute their messages. There are hundreds of social media influencers within the lifestyle industry, and YouTube and Instagram appear to be the two most popular platforms. These influencers have individual personalities but seem to operate in the same way. Therefore, if we understand how one lifestyle influencer operates, we can understand how many of them operate. To conduct research, a case study focused on one influencer, Lucie Fink, a continually growing and successful influencer, and it will combine the pentadic and content analyses to draw conclusions.

Background on Lucie Fink

Lucie Fink is a social media influencer and a lifestyle host at Refinery29, leading digital-media company focused on women. Refinery29 provides its audience with the inspiration and tools to discover and pursue a more independent, stylish, and informed life (Refinery29 Corporate). Fink has a following of more than 65,000 people on Instagram and two YouTube shows, "Try Living with Lucie" and "Lucie for Hire." Her "Try Living with Lucie" video series currently has 46 videos, which have more than one million views combined.

In a personal interview with Fink, she described her personal brand in two ways. First, she described herself as a lifestyle personality, noting "I'm not trying to be a beauty blogger or a fashion blogger or a fitness blogger. I am kind of every piece of the puzzle. I can try out almost anything and it would feel natural to my feed. I feel like the audience is really there for me and my personal life, which includes fitness, food, fashion, beauty. Almost everything" (Personal interview). Fink then shared that curiosity was a part of her personal brand: "I like my personal brand to be all about being exploratory and trying new things and it really is closely aligned with both my Refinery29 video content and also just my personal persona of who I really am" (Personal interview). While already a respected lifestyle social media influencer, Fink's exploratory and versatile personal brand has resulted in an increase by hundreds of followers on a daily basis.

Fink's personal brand has caused many companies to seek her out to promote their products through advertisements on both Instagram and YouTube, attempting to connect the brand and the consumer on a more personal level. While Fink's influencer marketing tactics appear more traditional on Instagram, when she utilizes YouTube, a more unique storytelling influencer marketing approach is used, which could be the secret to her success.

IV. Findings and Discussion

This qualitative study found that social media influencers' success does not rely solely on their follower count, but their ability to influence followers through authenticity, confidence, and interactivity to create a connection between the follow and the brand.

Social Media Influencers on Instagram

This research found factors that make a social media influencer successful using a pentadic analysis. Many influencers, like Fink, take to Instagram because it is a quick and easy way to post authentic content and streamline brands directly into posts by tagging them. Tagging brands makes it easier for an interested consumer to go directly to the source of the product.

In order to examine Fink's posts further, a pentadic analysis was performed. A pentadic analysis studied the act, agent, agency, and purpose of the images posted by Lucie. In many social media influencers' posts, including Fink, the act, agent, and purpose are all generally the same. Based on primary research, the author found that the act is the advertisement being posted to Instagram; the agent, is the influencer. In this analysis, Fink is the agent. The purpose is to promote a product and gain follower interest, follow the influencer's lead, and purchase the said product. What changes in every influencer's post and makes

it unique is the agency, which is the different brands that the influencer promotes. Since Fink is a lifestyle influencer, there are a number of brands that she promotes on Instagram, such as Murad Skincare, Carnival Cruise Line, and Soul Cycle. These findings are reflected in one of Fink's Instagram posts based on a pentadic analysis.

Pentadic Analysis Performed on Instagram

In *Figure 1*, Fink (agent) is advertising for a company (agency), Murad, which is a skincare brand. Fink has a partnership with Murad, and it is her job to reach a new, younger market for this product that has been predominantly sold to middle-aged women in the pre-social media era (purpose). Fink posts Instagram content for Murad as well as weaves its products into her YouTube videos to try to expose it to her followers, which include Murad's desired demographic.

Figure 1: Murad advertisement on Instagram posted by @luciebfink

Figure 1 shows one of Fink's Instagram posts for Murad. What many people might notice is that Fink uses brand specific tags, such as #ad, #muradskincare, and @muradskincare. The use of the company name gives the followers many opportunities to connect with the brand directly through Fink with a simple click.

Marketing the Feeling

When it comes to her personality, Fink leaves a quirky, down-to-earth, and relatable impression on her followers. In her photos, she tries to market the product through her personality. In order to advertise the Murad product, Fink applied it to her face in a fun and exciting way (as shown in *Figure 1*) that is reflective of her quirky style. While it might seem like the placement of the product on her face is not a big deal, it catches the attention of consumers without them even realizing that they are viewing an advertisement.

In addition to the placement of the product on her face, Fink holds the product that a consumer can buy in stores. This is an opportunity for potential product consumers to begin to recognize the brand without having personally experienced the product and visualize using the product themselves.

If the follower didn't get a chance to catch the name of the product through the image, there is another opportunity for them to do so in Fink's caption. The caption in *Figure 1* provides the product in addition to tagging the company so that followers can read it and remember the name of the product and not have to rely solely on the image. In addition, Fink writes that she is "never going to take it (Murad) off," subtly hinting to her followers how much she enjoys wearing the product and having it as a part of her everyday skincare routine. This strategy directly relates to Bandura's social learning theory (Bandura, 3) in the literature review. It is the idea that influencers have the power to persuade their followers through the actions of the influencer. The follower, as Bandura explains, would then replicate the actions of the influencer. In this case,

Fink's followers—she and Murad hope—will begin to use Murad skincare products.

Enhancing Relationships with Followers

Instagram also gives followers the opportunity to talk to these influencers and the ability for the influencer to interact and respond to their followers. For example, some followers left comments on the image shown in *Figure 1*:

- "I'm looking for a good sunscreen to put under my make-up. Maybe ill try this one!"
- "I am testing out another brand but when I'm finished I'll switch to this one. Thanks for the recommendation!"
- "I haven't found a sunscreen I like yet so really want to try this one out!!"
- Fink responded all of these followers confirming their interest in the product:
- "I've been wearing it every day and you can barely tell its there"
- "Let me know how you like it!!!!"
- "Do it!!!!"

The two-way conversation between the influencer and the follower gives this advertisement a new dimension that did not exist before the use of social media influencers. This two-way conversation also gives the influencer one more opportunity to promote the product through a personal recommendation, which can turn a follower into a brand consumer. Advertising and gaining new brand consumers through Fink's social media advertisements is the main goal of Murad's partnership with Fink.

This pentadic analysis reveals that everything that Fink and other social media influencers do to promote products through Instagram is meticulously planned out and strategic. An influencer shares with followers firsthand experiences of how a product can benefit them. This then allows a consumer to connect to the brand in a new and innovative way. From the placement of the product, to the caption, and even to the context of the scene in which the advertisement is taking place, everything is executed in a particular way to maximize brand recognition through individual personalities.

Performing a pentadic analysis on Fink's Instagram content helped answer Research Question 1 which was, what makes a social media influencer successful? Through examination of Fink's Instagram content, it is clear that she is successful in placing products in photos, directly linking the company to potential consumers, and answering consumers' comments. This shines a positive light on the advertised brand as well as encouraging consumers to recognize that the brand will help answer their problems.

Social Media Influencers on YouTube

In addition to Instagram, social media influencers use YouTube to target desired audiences. What makes YouTube such a unique media platform? Unlike Instagram, which is mostly photos, graphics, and short video clips, YouTube gives an influencer the opportunity to create and share videos that dig deeper into their lives. Social media influencers create how-to videos, advice videos, and so much more, and that viewers watch because they value influencer opinions.

Unlike other social media influencers, Fink produced content through an original web series called "Try Living with Lucie." In true form to Fink's personal brand, the whole premise of the series is that Fink tries a new lifestyle change for five days at a time and records her experience vlog style (video-blog). By using this style of presentation, the viewers feel as if they are taking the journey with Fink. She hopes that by sharing these experiences with her followers, they are encouraged to implement these lifestyle changes into their everyday lives as well. In an interview, Fink stated that "overly branded content has a way less impactful outcome than content that seems organic" (Personal interview). Each weekly challenge is designed to influence people to make subtle changes in their everyday lives. Two examples of Fink's videos are "5 days of minimalism and cutting out excess in your life" and "5 days of personal acceptance and self-confidence." While all her videos attempt to influence a lifestyle change, each subtly includes branded content as well. Brands now focus on marketing products through personal experience. This allows a brand to be worked into an individual's life as opposed to just being advertised through traditional marketing strategies.

Content Analysis Performed on YouTube

Performing a content analysis helped in further answering RQ 1, what makes a social media influencer successful" In addition, the analysis helped to evaluate the hypothesis that social media influencer marketing has successfully changed the way that brands interact with consumers. In order to look at the success of lifestyle social media influencer marketing through YouTube videos, a content analysis was performed on Fink's series, "Try Living with Lucie," looking for the three specific characteristics that are thought to create successful influencer content. Each video was evaluated based on authenticity, confidence, and interactivity between the influencer and the viewer. For this study, the researcher focused on one "Try Living with Lucie" video called, "5 Days of New Experiences," which was sponsored by Carnival Cruise Line. This analysis used the three characteristics to determine how successful Fink was in producing branded content via YouTube for Carnival Cruise Line.

Figure 2: Screenshot from "5 Days of New Experiences," Carnival Cruise Line

Influencer Authenticity

For social media influencer's whose focus is on lifestyle branding, authenticity is key. This study defined authenticity as the influencer being genuine, honest, and open with her followers. Authenticity allows an influencer to relate with followers on a new level and aids in building a relationship between followers and brands. Creating content for YouTube that is authentic gives influencers the opportunity to share their personal thoughts, opinions, and style with their followers who may then take their lead.

In Fink's video, "5 Days of New Experiences," she was challenged, with her friend Ashley, to try something new every day for a week. Since this video is also an advertisement for Carnival Cruise Line, Fink's new experiences take place on a five-day Carnival Cruise. The company attempts to establish itself as a young, vibrant, and friendly cruise line. As a result, Carnival chose to partner with Fink, an individual who is authentic and relatable and shows off those similar personality traits in her videos.

In a personal interview, Fink explained that being authentic in her videos is important and that is what makes her unique from other lifestyle influencers. She said, "the reason why I have become so successful is because all of my content is one hundred percent me. My personality on camera mirrors my personality off camera; there is no acting" (Personal interview).

"5 Days of New Experiences" stays true to Fink's authentic, down-to-earth style while showing off the similarities between her and the cruise line. While many of the Fink's experiences showcase what the cruise line has to offer, such as ropes courses, water parks, spa services and more, Fink also takes the time to challenge herself to new experiences on a smaller more relatable scale such as unplugging and prioritizing a close friendship, as shown in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3: Screenshot from "5 Days of New Experiences" posted by Refinery29

While "5 Days of New Experiences" is all about trying new experiences, it is ultimately meant to inspire Fink's followers through her authentic content to experience Carnival Cruise Line. This video could be considered successful because, as one of Lucie's followers commented, "I seriously cannot wait to go on a cruise with my best friend!! Adding this my bucket list." Carnival Cruise Line directly benefits from Fink's content because her followers are introduced to the company. This new awareness encourages thousands of new customers to consider Carnival Cruise based on the enthusiasm that Fink and her friend share from their experience.

Influencer Confidence

Brands want influencers promoting their products who are confident in themselves. When influencers express confidence in themselves, it also promotes confidence in the brand. This brand confidence leaves a lasting impression on followers and causes them to consider becoming a consumer of the product. According to the Influencer Orchestration Network, "51 percent of marketers believe they get better customers from influencer marketing. That is because the relationship began with the trust of the influencer" (Burgess, 2017).

Although Carnival Cruise Line had a loss of customer trust due to experiences while on cruises, the company is continually working on building confidence with consumers. In addition, Carnival has a certain stigma of being a lower quality cruise line in comparison to their competitors, Royal Caribbean and Norwegian Cruise Line. This stigma could cause potential customers to choose one of Carnival's competitor cruise lines when planning their vacation. Carnival needed an individual that target consumers trust to advertise its product, which is, ultimately, why it partnered with Fink.

This content analysis found that confidence can be shown through both verbal and physical actions. In her video, "5 Days of New Experiences," Fink exhibits confidence in the cruise line through the specific claims she makes about her Carnival experiences. These claims can also be backed up by footage of her participating in an array of experiences. Throughout the video, Fink consistently uses word such as "excited," "amazing," and "success" in the video, which verbally shows followers that Fink is confident in the company. For example, Fink refers to a snorkeling trip as "a great success." Fink shows confidence in the Carnival Cruise Line by spending an entire video promoting and highlighting its features in a positive light. In addition, the trust her followers have in her made Carnival believe that Fink was the perfect individual to reach their target demographic.

Figure 4: Lucie displays confidence through her body language in "Try Living with Lucie."

Fink also exhibits confidence through her actions and body language. In all of Fink's YouTube content, when talking to her audience, Fink makes eye contact with the camera when having a conversation with her followers. She also constantly appears engaged and speaks with certainty. *Figure 4* is a screenshot from one of Fink's "Try Living with Lucie" videos, which shows her talking with followers while exhibiting these body language characteristics. By creating content like this, viewers feel as if they are participating in a personal conversation with her. Positive talk and body language give the illusion to followers that influencers instill their confidence in themselves as well as the brand, which could then make the follower more inclined to purchase the advertised product.

Influencer Interactivity

Traditional public relations influencer marketing tactics utilize media outlets such as newspapers, television, and radio to reach audiences. These traditional tactics can be successful in terms of increasing brand awareness, but don't necessarily create a relationship between the brand and consumers like social media influencer marketing does today. Through interactive video content, influencers shed a positive light on brand products and invite their followers to purchase a product and experience it themselves.

This study defines interactivity as the influencer working together with the viewer to solicit feedback. Fink's "Try Living with Lucie" series would not exist if it weren't for the interactivity that she initiates with her followers. Throughout all her videos, Fink takes the time to ask her followers their opinions about what she is sharing and also tells the viewers to apply her experiences to their everyday lives. In "5 Days of New Experiences," Fink signs off by saying, "In true form to the series, now you guys need to take what we did this week and apply it to your lives." While viewers can interpret that goodbye in their own way, this is one last opportunity for Fink to push her experiences and products onto her followers. In this case, Fink is giving her followers one last reminder of her experiences on Carnival Cruise Line and encouraging them to participate in the experiences she's had.

In addition to verbal interactivity with her followers, Fink invites her followers to share their feedback at the end of her videos. When followers leave comments on her video, it offers an opportunity for a personal conversation between Fink and her followers, creating a more personal connection. An example of this can be seen in *Figure 5*.

Figure 5: Follower comment on "5 Days of New Experiences"

Similar to the findings of the pentadic analysis performed on Fink's Instagram post, comments also allow an opportunity for a conversation between followers to develop that reflect the represented brand. In "5 Days of New Experiences," Fink invites her followers to not only engage with her through comments, but also with each other. This interactivity causes followers to comment, asking what ship she is on, what activities are available on other ships, and other Carnival Cruise Line brand specific questions. Having conversations that ask these kinds of questions are an important part of the strategy behind Carnival Cruise Line's partnership with Fink.

According to the Influencer Orchestration Network, "37 percent better retention is reported through word-of-mouth advertising" (Burgess). The literature review explains electronic word of mouth as a strategy, which refers to any statement made by potential, actual, and former customers about a product or company via the internet. Fink is a master at electronic word of mouth, as many successful influencers are, not only because she takes on the role of forming consumers' opinions about products and services, but she also encourages them to share their opinions with other consumers as well. Since word of mouth is the most credible and trusted source of brand marketing, followers may be more inclined to take a Carnival Cruise based on their interaction with Fink's content.

Findings from this content analysis prove that interactivity, authenticity, and confidence are crucial characteristics for influencers to possess when creating lifestyle branded content. When influencers possess these three characteristics, they are likely to be successful in attaining brand partnership goals. In addition, this content analysis helped answer RQ 2, do companies view social media influencers as positive or negative for their companies? This research above affirms H1 that social media influencer marketing has successfully changed the way that brands interact with its consumers.

V. Conclusion

Social media influencers who promote a lifestyle brand are most successful interacting with consumers when they are authentic, confident, and interactive in their content. While this research focused on lifestyle branding, the same likely holds true for many products that public relations agencies and marketers promote, from automobiles to electronics to household products.

The use of social media influencer marketing in lifestyle public relations initiatives has broken the wall between the consumer, the brand, and followers through social media content. Before the rise of social media influencers, advertising to brand consumers was one-sided. Before the days of social media, a consumer could only see a product through print advertisements, billboards, radio ads, and television commercials. Today, a consumer now can interact with a product through social media. Watching a trusted source, such as Fink, use a product allows consumers to feel as if they are making a more informed decision when making a purchase. Through research, it is evident that social media influencer marketing has, in fact, changed the way brands interact with consumers in a positive way. The success that brands may expect is due to this two-way interactive public relations tactic and helps to explain why social media influencer marketing is one of the biggest trends of 2017.

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Finding the Purpose of Tasty Videos
According to Social Media Audiences

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Abstract

The digital age has brought a new form of integrated advertising through social media content. Today, users no longer want to be advertised to, but advertisers still need to attract consumers. Using Tasty videos as an example, this study examined how social media content is used to integrate advertisements into a medium popular with consumers. Utilizing a survey and focus group, the researcher studied social media users' motivations for watching Tasty videos, and how the integration of an ad affects the viewer. While users enjoy and often seek out this short-form video content, the study found that most viewers consider it entertainment, and don't it consume for its intended educational purposes.

I. Introduction

Facebook has become a major platform for companies to release short form content because it permeates so many different audiences with little to no effort on their behalf. One current trend has been "Tasty" videos. Tasty videos originated on Buzzfeed, with a camera overlooking a single plate or pot as an unidentified chef prepares, cooks, plates, and samples a recipe. These videos contain a range of recipes, from foreign street foods to a couple's Valentine's Day dinner. In fewer than two minutes, viewers can see the entirety of a dish's creation, from gathering the ingredients to eating the final product. These style videos have moved beyond Buzzfeed to major food-focused networks and websites, and beyond food to craft-, family-, and fashion-based tutorials.

Short form content has become increasingly popular on social media. Many online-based content producers opt to keep videos shorter than 10 minutes to ensure that they keep audiences' attention through the end of the video. It has become a way for people to get information on entertainment, news, politics, fashion, food, and much more in a simple and comfortable setting. Because of their potential reach on Facebook, companies have used short form content to reach their audiences and to permeate the social networks of those audiences. Many consumers do not register this as an advertisement, but the popularity of these videos has prompted even more companies to produce these videos, or sponsor ones that fit their demographics.

Because this content is easily accessible and permeable, Tasty videos have become exceedingly popular on Facebook. The current research aimed at finding the purpose of these videos, not for the producer,

but for the viewer. It theorizes that these videos are not just forms of advertising and learning materials, but also entertainment. Although these videos are booming in popularity, viewers are primarily watching for entertainment purposes. The influx of these videos has created consistent viewer interest, but a much smaller percentage is actually cooking the featured items. Therefore, Tasty videos have become a successful marketing tool, but only moderately successful as a resource for new recipes.

II. Literature Review

To further understand the implementation and user views of Tasty videos, the literature review focused on the purpose of social media, both for the user and as a space for advertisement. It considered food and beverage advertising due to the advertisement aspect that many of these videos contain. It also examined the concept of audience labor as a means of promotion or sponsorship for other companies. The goal was to understand the use of Tasty videos as related to a company's motivation for advertising.

Student Social Media Use

Social media has become not only a way for users to stay informed, but also a way to inform the world about themselves. People, young people in particular, use social networking sites to present themselves to others, but primarily to fulfill a need to belong (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012).

To present a certain image, Facebook users can edit and decide what they want to post. For example, Peluchette and Karl (2010) showed that students who preferred to be seen as hardworking posted different content than those that wished to be seen as "wild" (Peluchette & Karl, 2010). They also can remove content they find unappealing, as many users use the "untagging" feature to put aside photos they find not relevant and interesting (Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009).

To fulfill the need to belong, users prefer the wall [timeline] function. Users who are less self-accepting tend to share more private personal information over Facebook, a way to interact with their peers and foster relationships (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Pempek et. al, 2009). Posting or sharing their preferences with others as a way to express identity, rather than through photos or "update" posts (Pempek et. al, 2009).

Because Facebook visualizes human connection, users often feel a boost in their connectedness, leading to a boost in self-esteem (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). Users can visualize their "networks," or their social groups such as college, family, student organizations, work, etc. (Pempek et. al, 2009).

These factors are some of the driving forces behind the use of Facebook. Facebook users can present a certain image to the select few they allow in their network. This image can be constructed through status updates, posting photos, and sharing videos. This is the origin of the "Tasty' videos" popularity, as users shared them repeatedly to present that image and connect with other users.

Food and Beverage Advertising

Advertising of food and beverage products has a strong effect on what people choose to consume. A controlled study by UCLA Public Health showed that when food-based advertisements were run in a 45-minute show, viewers were more likely to eat provided snacks after the show (Shimoga & Zimmerman, 2014). The group that was shown non-food related advertising chose snacks with 65 less calories on average, a statistically significant difference. The study implies that long-term ifood advertising, which is shown repeatedly over someone's lifetime, will have an even stronger effect on caloric intake. Therefore, food advertising and food videos have a strong influence on what people buy in stores.

Particularly on Facebook, Food advertising is useful, particularly on Faceboo. A study in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that 25 of the top 27 most-liked food-centered brands on Facebook utilized user-generated content as promotional material (Freeman et al, 2014). This type of content reaches audiences and is effective—the pages tested were part of the top 250 most-liked pages on Facebook Australia. However, many of these pages were for foods or places that served foods with high calorie content and low nutritional value. Using a noninvasive marketing strategy to reach audiences is a way to achieve the goal that many social media advertisers strive for. This type of advertising is becoming increasingly popular across brands and throughout social media platforms.

Facebook Advertising

At first, interests and personal connections were the focal point of Facebook users' likes, but an abundance of "like-able" pages started popping up on companies' websites and other platforms. When companies saw the emerging popularity of Facebook, they also saw an opportunity for cheap, widespread, seamless advertising. Facebook advertising is unique in that to be successful, it must give the audience the necessary information without seeming like a sales pitch (Ramsaran-Fowdar & Fowdar, 2013).

Now, users have become "Facebook-fatigued" because they have seen their feeds filled with more advertisements as they have liked more company pages (Donston-Miller, 2012). Facebook quickly adapted to the influx of company pages by moving to the timeline system and making updates from pages only available by visiting those pages or searching for them on a news feed. Companies struggled to continue to reach their audiences, without consistently posting to make sure they reached the top of the feed with every refresh (Donston-Miller, 2012).

This "fatigue" has impacted the realm of social marketing, rather than just advertising on social media (Ramsaran-Fowdar & Fowdar, 2013). The network of users is utilized to spread a brand across user platforms, and the advertising is spread naturally and by user choice. Rather than spewing obvious advertisements, companies release integrated content, such as coupons, events, or informational videos. Thanks to Facebook's search history algorithms, advertisements can be tailored to users' demographics, making sure that advertisements reach the most relevant target audiences (Ramsaran-Fowdar & Fowdar, 2013).

Many businesses, celebrities, and brands have since taken on social media as another form of generating brand attention (Rousseau, 2012). It can often make interactions between consumers and producers fun and exciting. A social media user can now get responses from celebrities or even companies through a tweet or comment. However, this relationship can be a slippery slope, as ConAgra discovered in a marketing mishap in 2011 (Rousseau, 2012). The company invited bloggers to a dinner, and expected them to react in a certain way when they revealed that the "intimate" Italian food entrees they were served were Marie Calendar's dishes. However, many of the bloggers were outraged by the lie, and a fun marketing event for ConAgra turned into a PR nightmare. They cancelled the remaining five events and compensated all the bloggers for travel and babysitting (Rousseau, 2012). Because the event was misleading, the subsequent blog posts and advertisements were not favorable. This mishap was a turning point for advertising, as companies realized that they could no longer trust that audiences would only understand what the ads. The social media era has created a way for companies to be held accountable and for internet users to hold them accountable.

As online users grow tired of advertisements and find ways to avoid them, companies develop alternative methods of advertising. Blurred advertising is the preferred method of many companies that wish to have an active presence on social media, as it easily combines advertisements with entertainment. Aksoy, Bhatnagar, and Malkoc (2004) recognized the importance of "brand embedding," such as product placement or embedded content. These types of advertising often fits advertisers' commodities within the natural narrative of visual content. Despite lack of strong empirical research, many advertisers have moved in this direction based on consumer feedback.

Audience Labor and Commodification

With these new models of advertising, companies must also rely on new ways to spread their brand. Social media websites' brand embedding was first described by Dallas Smythe as a way for the audience to serve advertisers by watching their material and occasionally (sometimes unconsciously) spreading it (Nixon, 2014). This "audience labor" turns the audience into commodity, meaning that the audience itself became ads as it bought or talked up certain products. In the digital age, the concept of audience labor expanded and exploded, as advertisers had a much more permeable surface to spread advertisements.

Advertisers have collaborated with Facebook to capitalize on audience labor and created sponsored stories to capitalize on the social media platform's market value (Fisher, 2015). In these stories, an average user's status update becomes a sponsored ad. When a user makes a post and mentions a business or company, that company pays Facebook to turn the post into an ad. The post then gets special treatment: it is moved to the top of the News Feed for their "friends," and the formatting is changed to include a link to the company through clickable logos. By changing small details of items that would have shown up anyway,

advertisers capitalize on the sharing nature of social media users. This way, ad content spreads without the advertisers spending much as far as the user's network spreads.

Sponsored stories raised many concerns. Simply mentioning a visit can turn into a recommendation or endorsement, which may be the opposite of the purpose of the post but benefits the company (Fisher, 2015). There have also been many privacy concerns as users prefer Facebook not to mine through their posts and pick out certain topics (Fisher, 2015). Users also do not get paid in this equation, even though they are producing the content.

The problem with audience labor in the digital era is not transparency. Users do not realize that they are seeing or creating sponsored content, and may inadvertently promote something to other users. However, advertisers and social media sites make a lot of revenue from audience labor. Because of this new model for advertising on social media, it has become easier for ads to slip by unnoticed under the cover of regular user's posts.

As social media has grown throughout the digital age, so has social media advertising. However, this has become increasingly difficult as internet users quickly tire of seeing unwanted ads on the content they are seeking. With the invention of ad blockers and general avoidance of advertising online, companies have responded by expanding their methods of advertising. Going forward, user-generated content has become the go-to method of advertising. It is effective in a social media platform due to its nativity and seamlessness. Although this has been largely successful, a brand cannot depend only on user-generated content for advertising. So, any content that can be spread through users as easily as it is generated is the second best option. Advertisements built into content that users enjoy, such as product placement or video partnerships, are becoming increasingly more popular in the digital age as advertisers struggle to reach their audiences through social media.

III. Methods

To learn about user interaction with Tasty-style videos, the author posted a survey online, allowing anybody to answer the questions after clicking on a link. The 10 survey questions were intended to identify the participant's level of knowledge and interaction with Tasty-style videos online. These questions asked not only if they had seen videos, but also how they viewed, shared, or used them, if at all. Responses from 132 participants helped the current author to understand how Tasty-style videos were consumed by the participants.

At the end of the survey, participants were offered a chance to participate in a focus group later. A total of eight people volunteered to participate in a focus group, which covered topics, such as Tasty videos as advertising, purpose of sharing videos, and why people do or do not make the recipes. It was intended to gather strong qualitative data about the motivations behind the answers given in the survey by asking the reasoning and results of the participants' viewing, sharing, and cooking.

IV. Findings and Results

Social Media and Tasty Videos

All 132 participants indicated that they use some form of social media, with Facebook being the most popular outlet (98.5%). Instagram and Snapchat were tied for the second most popular, with 120 participants indicating usage of either platform.

The numbers were just as strong for people who were familiar with Tasy videos and people who had definitely or possibly seen similar style videos from other outlets (92.4%). A majority of participants (99.2%) had been exposed to these videos through Facebook, and half (50.0%) had seen them on Instagram as well. Videos on Twitter reached only 10.6% of participants overall, even though 52.3% of the participants indicated they use Twitter.

Spread and Usage of Tasty Videos

Participants used a variety of time to watch Tasty videos, 32.6% watched "once a day," 34.8% "once a week," 22.7% "multiple times a day," and 9.8% "once a month," as shown in *Figure 1*. Among participants, 53.8% had never opted to "Save a video for Later."
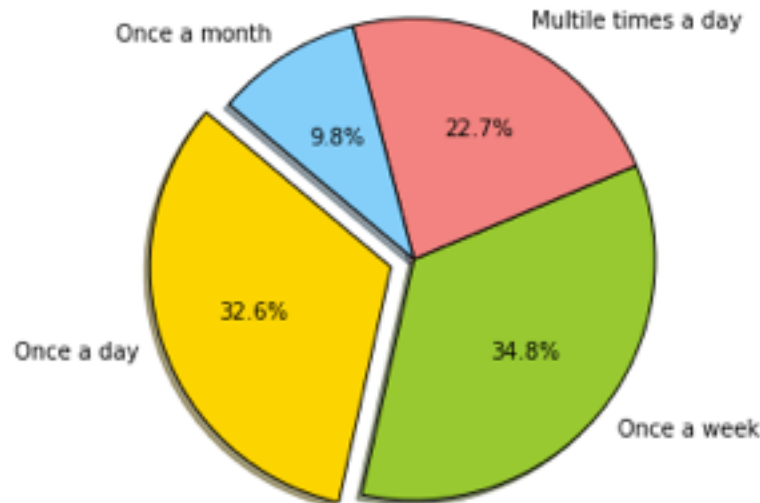
Figure 1. How often participants watch Tasty-style videos.

Among 132 participants, 103 (78.0%) decided not to share Tasty-style videos on their own feed, no matter the platform, but those who did preferred Facebook Timeline (21.2%) over their Twitter profile (1.5%).

In response to a question on sharing a video with friends, only 40 individuals (30.3%) indicated that they had never shared a video with a friend. Those who had shared a video with a friend preferred Facebook (42.4%), using Timelines, Messenger, and the comments section to share content with friends.

Participants in the focus group indicated that they preferred to keep their social media accounts "clean," which is why they do not post or share these videos to their own feeds. However, many factors led them to share a video with a friend. Some participants said that certain ingredients, themes, or foods reminded them of a certain person, which was the main reason they decided to share a video. Another reason for sharing videos was to connect with friends, and open an invitation to get together to make the recipe, although most noted that they would not follow through on actually cooking or baking.

Although the overwhelming majority of participants indicated they had seen and watched Tasty-style videos on at least a semi-regular basis, 51.5% of participants had never made a recipe (Refer to *Figure 2*). Participants were not often inspired by a Tasty-style video: 52.3% were never inspired and 37.9% were inspired only 1-5 times (Refer to *Figure 3*).
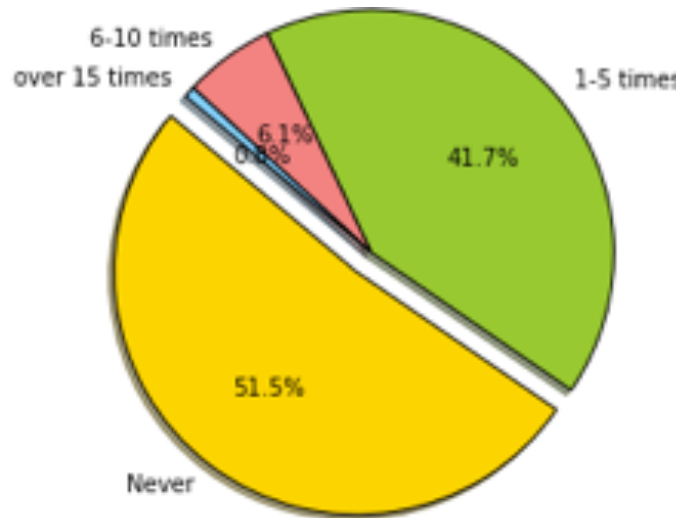
Figure 2. The number of times participants have made a Tasty-style video recipe.
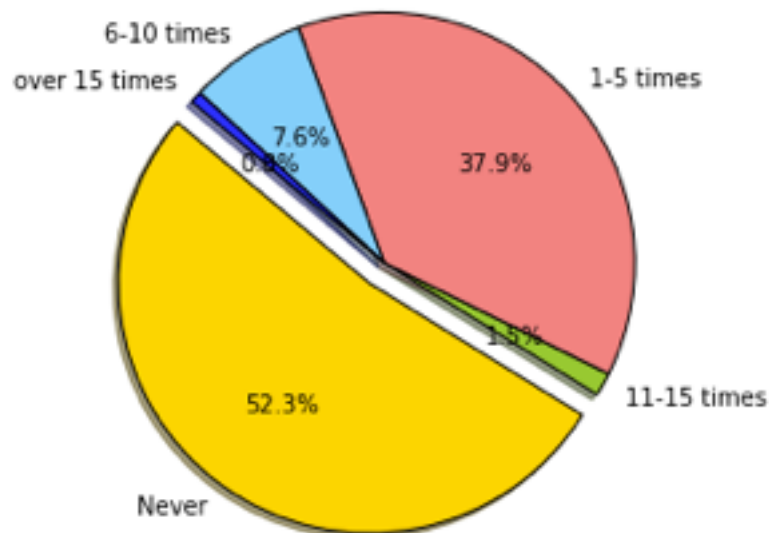

Figure 3. The number of times participants have made something inspired by a Tasty-style video.

Focus group participants pointed out two main factors that deterred them from making the recipes that they watched. First, many participants noted that they were "just lazy most of the time." Although the videos were quick and simple, they did not depict much of the preparation or cleanup that went with the recipe. They noted that the less ingredients a recipe had, the more appealing it was, because not only would there be less to shop for, but there would also be less raw ingredients left over. Second, amid the constant influx of videos, participants just could not remember what they wanted to make. Videos were either played sporadically through browsing sessions or they were binge-watched and too many were playing at once. Videos auto play on news feeds when users are either not thinking about making food or not expecting to see food. When this happens, a video is acknowledged but quickly forgotten as the user continues to scroll to other content. Tasty videos have become such a staple in the constantly rotating cycle of video content on news feeds that they have become easy to ignore. In other cases, people might watch one Tasty video after another after another, creating a black hole of Tasty information. Participants mentioned that they consumed so many videos that their memory began to blur, and they could not effectively recall what they thought they might want to make. Those who had made food from Tasty videos said they cooked frequently, so at least the problem of motivation did not affect them. Instead of finding a video to make a specific food, they looked at

the ingredients they had and looked up a relevant video.

Tasty Videos as Advertising

Although the survey included no questions on advertising, the focus group reflected it as a major discussion topic. When initially asked if they saw Tasty videos as advertisements, participants responded with a strong "no." However, they did recall with strong distaste the few videos they could remember with their obvious partnerships and advertising. Participants recalled certain videos were "pointless" or "too simple"' when they had a sponsorship.

It was mentioned that each parent brand of the Tasty-style videos (i.e. Buzzfeed, Food Network, etc.) uses a certain brand of equipment that is featured in their videos, which was then acknowledged as a form of advertising within the videos. Further, it was acknowledged that some of these videos pique viewers' interest in certain products (without necessarily naming a brand), which prompts them to purchase that product. It was also notable that people preferred to watch these videos on Facebook, rather than looking to the parent brand's website or YouTube channel. There was also a brief discussion on the benefit of Tasty videos as a general learning tool. Two participants said that rather than paying attention to the recipe provided, they preferred to take away the general rules of cooking, such as cooking temperature or time.

In addition to the videos, Buzzfeed recently released a cookbook that consumers can personalize with their favorite genres of Tasty recipes. Many of the recent Tasty videos have advertised this book, and it is widely advertised on many of Buzzfeed Tasty's social media pages. Even with the knowledge gained in videos, participants in the focus group said they would not purchase the cookbook because they generally believe that the amount they cook would not be changed by owning the cookbook.

Limitations

The survey was sent out through various groups and pages on the author's personal network on Facebook, severely limiting the breadth of participants. No questions were asked about demographics except for their age for brevity and privacy. Due to a small number of age categories, it is even unclear if the participants reflected college students well. Many potential participants indicated that they would only spare a limited amount of time on a survey or focus group, limiting the length, depth, and number of questions included in both the survey and focus group. A major limitation of the focus group was the necessity to have it on the current author's campus.

V. Conclusion

Although a strong majority of social media users have been exposed to Buzzfeed's Tasty videos or similar videos from different outlets, most users do not and have not consumed the content for its intended purpose. In the social media market, most producers have to focus on long term implementation of their content. Otherwise, their content may not be viewed among the rest of the major influx of online content.

Although many social media users reported being highly interested in these videos and often seeking them out, very few reported seeking them out for the intended content of the video. Some found the content relaxing, some find it educational, but very few found it to be a useful tool in their cooking repertoire. Tasty-style videos are another intriguing, distracting, flashy object that plaster the news feed of many Facebook users. These videos have the intent of teaching and sometimes advertising, but to social media users their purpose is the same as many other videos. There is potential for these videos to grow into a base for cooking knowledge as well as provide an aesthetically pleasing distraction for viewers.

Because Tasty-style videos have become such a fixture for social media users, they could be an extremely useful tool for advertisers. These videos have already started to become a way for parent brands to gain audiences as users share the content and generate audience labor. Food Network, Tastemade, Buzzfeed, Spoon, and others have already seen a major increase in brand recognition in the 18-30 age group because of their respective videos. If advertisers find a way to integrate themselves into the video product without being intrusive, they can capitalize on the strong user-generated content base of Tasty videos.

Acknowledgments

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A Content Analysis of NFL Team Online Branding

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Abstract

With yearly revenue in the billions and countless dedicated fans across the globe, the National Football League is the largest and most profitable professional sports league in the United States. Each team has a distinct brand personality that is communicated to fans to increase consumer recognition and strengthen fan loyalty. A content analysis was conducted to identify key elements of branding of NFL teams, examining the websites of the three highest valued franchises to identify their branding strategies. The research found that these teams incorporate comprehensive branding strategies on their websites to showcase their brand personality and interact with fans.

I. Introduction

The National Football League, which generates more than $12 billion in revenue, is the most profitable of the major American professional sports leagues, earning attention from fans around the world (Statista, 2017). Mexico, Brazil, Canada, South Korea, and Germany are just a few of the countries outside of the U.S. with a significant number of people who identify as NFL fans (Statista, 2015). There are several factors that may contribute to the NFL's popularity within the sports community, one of which is the establishment of unique brand personalities for each team.

There are 32 teams in the NFL, and most fans can associate a specific tone or characteristic with each of these teams because of their brand personality. These personalities are often reflective of a combination of traits, including number of wins, team reputation, and fan behavior. Since teams represent different areas of the nation, complete with distinctive histories and prominent figures, fans can choose which team they best identify with, which eventually translates into a virtually unbreakable sense of fan loyalty. Just as consumers prefer to only purchase their favorite brands, sports enthusiasts choose to support their favorite team(s).

Teams communicate their brand personalities to consumers both on and off the field. While behavior during games and press conferences are important elements of a team's overall reputation, the way a team chooses to portray itself directly to fans through its website plays an important role in the establishment of brand identity. Due to its interactive nature, and the importance of an online presence in the digital world, a team's website is one of the most effective ways to directly connect to consumers. To better understand how NFL teams choose to brand themselves online, this study analyzed the websites of the three highest valued

NFL teams—the Dallas Cowboys, New England Patriots, and New York Giants—and examined what key elements of branding they incorporate on their homepages.

II. Literature Review

To determine the key elements of branding, and how brand identity influences consumer loyalty, the following literature review investigates examples of branding in general, in the online market, and in the context of the sports industry.

Key Elements of Branding

To establish the key components of a brand, it is first necessary to define the meaning of "brand." There are various definitions of what a brand is, but an integrated definition refers to a brand as a name, term, design, symbol, or other feature that differentiates one entity from another, and builds both reputation and future expectations of benefit (Miletsky & Smith, 2009; Wood, 2000). Just as different sources each had their own idea of what the term "brand" means, they also identified different components that are essential to creating a brand. Personality, differentiation, and mutual benefit were the most recurring themes.

A brand's personality is much like a human's personality. The nature of the personality influences the way consumers perceive the product, service, or company. This is an important element of creating a brand because it "creates the emotional connection that draws in a target market" and increases the likelihood of consumer loyalty (Miletsky & Smith, 2009, p. 3). Just as people tend to socialize with those whose personalities are compatible with theirs, consumers often gravitate toward brands that exhibit or share their ideal characteristics. A brand's personality reinforces consumers' perceptions of the quality of the brand and its position within the industry. It is also important for a brand to establish a distinct personality as a way to prevent other brands from copying its strategy (de Chernatony & Riley, 1998).

Differentiation is what makes the brand unique and attempts to give it an advantage over competitors. Unlike personality, which associates a feeling or characteristic with a brand, differentiation is the unique selling proposition that separates a brand's product or service from the competition. "Brands operate in a market where differentiation is crucially important" because it affects how a brand positions itself both in the minds of the consumer and its competitors (Wood, 2000, p. 664). Features, such as a secret recipe or a unique cleaning formula, are examples of how brands distinguish themselves within their market (Miletsky & Smith, 2009). Offering a variation of a product or service that is unique gives the consumer incentive to choose one brand over another. Without differentiation, brands would be too similar, thus eliminating the competition and decreasing market growth.

Having a distinguishable personality and a unique position are not enough to make a brand truly essential in the lives of consumers. There needs to be a perceived benefit for the consumer that is derived directly from conducting business with the brand. If a brand can deliver a reciprocal advantage for the consumer that results in a sustainable relationship, then there is a mutual benefit for both the brand and consumer (Clark, 2004). Mutual benefit is what gives consumers the motivation to invest their money in a brand's product or service. If a brand has an appealing personality and a unique product offering, but the consumer does not perceive any value in the transaction, then the brand cannot be successful because it will not generate revenue. When a brand becomes associated with a unique added value, which can only be received via that brand, consumers become more confident in the quality of the brand and eventually will be more loyal when making purchasing decisions (de Chernatony & Riley, 1998). Earning consumer loyalty is the ultimate goal when establishing a brand.

A brand is a representation of a company, person, or group that connects and communicates with consumers to remain relevant. Brands grow and adapt with trends and must constantly be conscientious of how they are perceived in the minds of the consumer. However, it is important that a brand remains true to its original purpose and does not lose its identity as it adjusts based on consumer needs (Clark, 2004). By emphasizing the key elements of branding, such as personality, differentiation, and mutual benefit, companies can ensure that their brands are able to gain consumer trust, confidence, and loyalty—resulting in wide recognition and longevity for the strongest brands.

Online Branding

In today's digital age, technology and online platforms have become integrated into the daily life of the consumer. With the availability of smartphones, laptops, and tablets, consumers can access the internet in seemingly any location. This accessibility to the internet, combined with the advent of social media networks, allows users to remain constantly connected to their family, friends, coworkers, and even their favorite brands. To better reach consumers through digital platforms, brands must first understand online consumer behavior, online branding, and how to establish an online presence.

Any brand trying to remain relevant in the digital world can benefit from understanding how and why consumers are using the internet. Online consumer behavior passes through three stages of development: intention, adoption, and continuance (Cheung, Chan, & Moez, 2005). The consumer's intention describes the reason for visiting a certain site or using a specific app, and is essentially the driving force behind their online activity. After the user accesses the site, several factors influence if the user decides to remain on the platform. The consumer's adoption of the site's message and decision to continue browsing on the site are influenced by the physical characteristics of the website, such as design, navigation, ease of use, interface, and usefulness, as well as characteristics of the company itself, such as brand reputation and service quality (Cheung et al., 2005). The website is often the first point of contact between the consumer and the brand, so it is crucial to ensure that it delivers the right message that will encourage the consumer to revisit the page later. The consumer's continued use of website is the decision to repurchase from or revisit a site that he or she has already visited. Most often, consumers will not continue to use a site if they do not have a positive experience upon the first visit. Brands can increase the likelihood that consumers will continue to use their sites if they understand the reason for the customer's visit, the first impressions of the site, and if the site meets the user's expectations. An increase in website traffic creates an increase in brand awareness and recognition, leading to a stronger position for the brand in the mind of the consumer.

Website content and design is an important aspect of online branding. Some brands fail to successfully reach their consumers because they do not go beyond simply creating a website. The rapid growth of technology and online platforms makes "brand building increasingly important in providing continuity and customer commitment" across multiple interfaces in a recognizable and interactive manner (Rowley, 2004, p. 228). If a website does not convey the same tone or message as television commercials or magazine advertisements, then consumers will not form a concrete association with the brand. To ensure a cohesive message across all media, a brand should utilize one marketing communication strategy with an integrated brand message (Rowley, 2004). Just as the brand personality is a representation of the entity as a whole, the website should be a direct reflection of the brand.

After creating a website that communicates the brand's message to consumers, the company or group will want to maintain the website and ensure that it reinforces the brand's online presence. An online presence is determined by the way a person or company utilizes social networks and online tools to build and maintain a personal brand (Harris & Rae, 2011). As social media continues to grow, consumers now expect most companies to have a strong online presence complete with a website and multiple social media accounts. Brands that take advantage of the opportunities that digital trends provide can distinguish themselves from those who are slower to adapt, and therefore not as relevant to the consumer (Harris & Rae, 2011).

Sports Branding

The professional sports marketing industry encompasses the sales of team gear and apparel, game tickets and experiences, and media packages and conferences. The variety of products and services offered by a sports league requires strong branding of a team to ensure one cohesive message is delivered to consumers. For a sports brand, it is necessary to consider how the consumers are interacting with the brand, what role the players have in the identity of the brand, and what methods other teams within the same league are using to establish their brands.

With most brands, websites are frequently used to interact with consumers and develop a stronger relationship. Since websites play a crucial role in the development of a brand community, and the sports industry is filled with countless fan-based communities, websites become the instrument through which fans can connect with their favorite teams as well as with other fans (Seo, Green, Ko, Lee, & Schenewark, 2007). If sports brands understand what brings fans to their websites, they can better tailor the site's content and

design to increase traffic and encourage continued website use. A survey conducted of NFL team website users found that fans were more likely to visit the website of a team that they already felt some sort of commitment or connection to, and were more inclined to be satisfied with that web experience and revisit the site if it exhibited the features or characteristics they already associated with that team (Seo et al., 2007). This information reemphasizes the importance of a cohesive brand message and communication strategy. Teams with effective branding strategies have stronger consumer-team relationships, and as a result will generate more revenue (Tsiotsou, 2013).

When a sports team is developing its brand, it needs to take into consideration the personalities and reputations of the players on that team. Likewise, when a team is drafting new players, it is important to account for the player's personal brand and evaluate whether or not it will impact the team's brand personality. The personal brand of the athlete can be a valuable asset to the team, especially when a high-profile athlete joins a team with a weak branding strategy (Williams, Kim, Agyemang, & Martin, 2015; Yang, Shi, & Goldfarb, 2009). The athlete's brand brings more dimension to the team's brand because it incorporates the athlete's personality and is subject to change based on performance. As master brands have one or two strong product brands, a strong team with a strong athlete brand will be able to differentiate itself from competing teams (Williams et al., 2015).

Differentiation is especially important within the sports industry because a large number of teams all play the same sport, and fans must decide which team they prefer based on a limited amount of unique characteristics. Since there are 32 teams within the NFL, the way teams represent their brands on their websites is crucial to strengthening relationships with fans. Fan loyalty frequently outweighs the team's actual winning record because even when a team is experiencing a losing season, fans often line up to see their favorite players take the field.

Based on prior research and the literature review, this study raised the following research questions:

RQ1: How do top NFL teams incorporate brand strategy on their websites?

RQ2: How does branding strategy influence the consumer's experience?

III. Methods

To better understand how NFL teams incorporate their personal brands on their websites, this study conducted a qualitative content analysis of the three highest valued NFL teams. Using the key elements of branding identified in the literature review, the websites were analyzed based on the appearance of the homepage and the presence of personality, differentiation, and a mutual benefit or consumer value. The homepage is the first impression that the consumer receives, so it is crucial that it implements a cohesive branding strategy.

The teams with the highest franchise value were sampled for this study because they exhibit measurable characteristics of success within a competitive, professional sports league. These teams are the Dallas Cowboys, New England Patriots, and New York Giants. The branding strategies used by these teams will provide insight into how NFL teams develop their personal brands and use them to drive sales among fans. The revenue and total value of each team can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. NFL team revenue and total value in 2016

Team	Revenue	Total value
Dallas Cowboys	$700M	$4.2B
New England Patriots	$523M	$3.4B
New York Giants	$444M	$3.1B

Source: Statista, 2017, https://www.statista.com/statistics/193534/franchise-value-of-national-football-league-teams-in-2016/

IV. Findings and Results

The study found that each team's website exhibited the three main elements of branding as determined from the literature review. Brand personality was evident by the incorporation of team colors, logos, fonts, and player images, as well as the tone conveyed through various images and text. When looking at the homepage, it is clear which team's website the viewer is visiting, and the tone conveyed by the site seems to fit with the general personality associated with that organization. An example of the inclusion of brand personality on the team's homepage is represented in *Figure 1*. The New England Patriots are known for their five Super Bowl championships, and for having a superior attitude in comparison to other NFL teams. The depiction of quarterback Tom Brady and head coach Bill Belichick posing victoriously with the Lombardi trophy and the multiple mentions of "five-time champions" on the homepage align with the Patriots' boastful brand personality.

*Figure 1.* Brand personality displayed on the New England Patriots' homepage.

Similarly, the Dallas Cowboys also used pictures of players Byron Jones and Ezekiel Elliott in the background of their website to emphasize their athlete-team personality. These photos, unlike the ones of Brady and Belichick, were not in full color and instead were only in tones of blue or white—emphasizing the Cowboys' team colors. The tone of these photos was more serious than the celebratory nature of the photos on the Patriots' homepage, and featured Jones and Elliott holding their jerseys and making direct eye contact with the camera. On the other hand, the New York Giants did not feature any athlete on their homepage, but rather a compilation of the team logo and name in various fonts and a monochromatic blue color scheme.

Since each team has its own brand personality, it becomes easier to distinguish them, especially when they have different winning records or notable headlines to emphasize on their websites. However,

because each team is a member of the NFL, the layouts of their websites are similar in adhering to NFL regulations and guidelines. This is where personality and differentiation become essential, because each website would otherwise be too similar and lose the appeal that fans are searching for when they visit online. The teams were able to differentiate themselves from the other teams in the league by featuring an event, player, or other element unique to them. For the Patriots, this was shown in the form of their recent Super Bowl win, and also in a raffle to win tickets to the Patriots 2017 season opening night. The raffle opportunity was not featured by other teams, and gave Patriots fans a unique advantage over fans of the Giants or Cowboys. The Cowboys' website has a specific section for fans, which does not exist on the other websites, that contains exclusive opportunities and content only available for the Cowboys fan community.

To add a unique element to their website, the New York Giants chose to highlight the upcoming NFL draft and the availability of a Giants app. While the draft is mentioned on the other team's websites, the Giants had a specific feature that allowed fans to track the progress of the draft, and follow the results live either through the website or the mobile app, as shown in *Figure 2*.
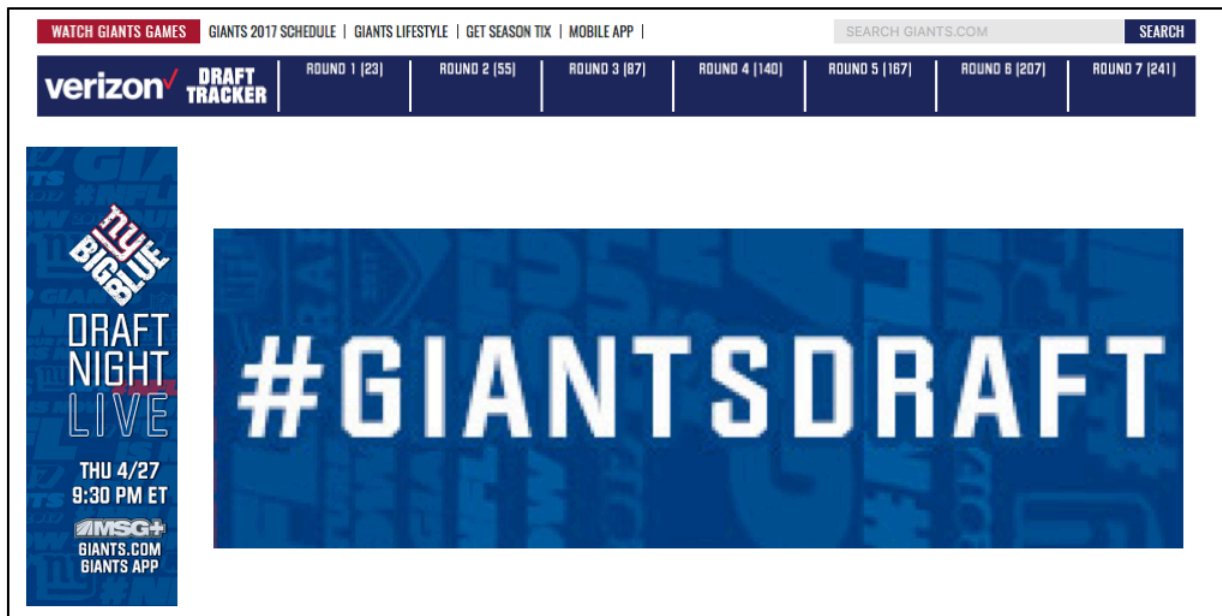
Figure 2. Differentiation utilized on the New York Giants' homepage.

The unique opportunity to follow along with the Giants during the NFL draft also provides a benefit to the consumer that is mutually beneficial to the Giants. When fans tune in to the draft through the Giants website or mobile app, it is driving traffic to that site and increasing brand awareness and recognition for the team. The fans are getting an exclusive experience and the Giants gain more attention and influence fan loyalty. Creating an added value for the consumer is a key element of branding because it provides the consumer with a reason to care about the brand and become more invested. Each team offers an element of mutual benefit on their websites in the form of exclusive stories, fan sections, contests, etc. The Dallas Cowboys emphasize the role of the fan and encourage their direct communication on their homepage, allowing fans to send emails to the team and answering them. The team highlights a recent question on their homepage as a way to show users that the Cowboys care about their fans' opinions, found in *Figure 3*.

COWBOYS MAILBAG   SPONSORED BY   Lite

"Why did the Cowboys release Romo? He can still retire without being released. Why would the Cowboys not want to retain his rights in the event that he decided to come back to football? One QB injury to the right team and we would be looking at a nice compensation via trade."

- J. TIDWELL

FORT SMITH, AR

READ ANSWER   ASK A QUESTION VIA EMAIL

Figure 3. The Cowboys answer fan mail and display them on homepage to add consumer value.

Each team incorporates personality, differentiation, and mutual benefit in the branding strategies on their websites, as shown in Table 2. The website design and content is user-friendly with clear page headlines and links to other information and websites that fans may find interesting. The similar structure of the three teams' website makes it clear that they all belong to one parent organization, but the ability to personalize content and add unique features gives each team the opportunity to separate itself from the competition.

Table 2. NFL teams exhibit key elements of branding on website homepages

	Element of Branding		
Team	**Personality**	**Differentiation**	**Mutual Benefit**
Dallas Cowboys	Tough, intimidating imagery	Exclusive page for the Cowboys fan.	"Cowboys Mailbag" – Q&A with fans
New England Patriots	Success-oriented, featuring strengths	Super Bowl wins and winning record	Exclusive fan raffle for game tickets
New York Giants	Team-oriented	NFL draft tracker	New York Giants mobile app

V. Discussion

All three of the teams analyzed displayed clear and cohesive branding strategies on their websites. Since they are the most valued NFL franchises, it can be assumed that they have strong brand recognition among fans, as well as distinct personalities. The websites are merely a platform for communicating the brand message with consumers and connecting with fans around the world. From the results, it can be inferred that no singular element of branding can be used by itself, so a combination of branding methods must be implemented to develop a strong brand identity.

For the Dallas Cowboys and the New England Patriots, a select few individual athletes played a major part in communicating the brand's personality. The New York Giants chose not to feature a specific player on the homepage, but rather focused on the team as a whole. These choices are reflective of the personalities of the teams themselves. The Cowboys rely on a tough and intimidating image to set them apart and the Patriots choose to focus on their strongest players and most notable accomplishments, while the Giants take pride in their comprehensive team history and do not promote the achievements of a singular player. All three of these teams are exhibiting brand personality, but they show it in different ways because of their respective reputations.

Their personalities were also expressed through their methods of differentiation. The New England Patriots were easily distinguishable from the other teams because they are the most recent Super Bowl champions. By emphasizing this across the homepage, it becomes clear that this team is unlike the competition because it is the league champion. The Giants' emphasis on the team as a whole is relayed through the focus on the upcoming NFL draft, because the draft signifies the beginning of building a new team. Taking a completely different tone, the Cowboys are often referred to as "America's Team," and they place a clear value on the fan's experience when visiting their website.

Each team benefits from the attention and loyalty of fans, simply due to the nature of sports. As a result, it is essential that the fan receives a benefit from visiting the team's website and interacting with them. Whether it is in the form of exclusive interviews, a fan-based community, or the satisfaction of a winning record, the teams offer various benefits for fans no matter what their interests may be.

VI. Conclusion

Teams with weaker brand identities can look to these NFL leaders as an example of how to successfully implement a cohesive brand strategy across multiple platforms. Sports branding differs from traditional corporate branding due to the dynamic nature of athlete-team relationships and team-consumer relationships. Teams rely more heavily on fan loyalty and recognition than most brands because a majority of their revenue is generated from ticket and apparel sales, regardless of its win-loss record.

This content analysis aimed to identify the key elements of branding that were utilized by the most valued, and arguably most successful, franchises in the NFL. The Dallas Cowboys, New England Patriots, and New York Giants all demonstrate comprehensive, integrated brand strategies on their websites. The websites were chosen as the framework of measurement for this analysis because of the ability to communicate directly with the consumer and offer a more complete brand representation than may be found on a social media profile or other media outlet.

This study analyzed only the top three NFL teams that provided sufficient evidence of the successful branding strategies within professional football. More comprehensive data could be gathered for future research if all of the teams and their branding strategies were analyzed. In the same vein, if a researcher was able to assess the teams' social media accounts as well as their websites, it could create a better understanding of each team's online presence. Overall, this research provides a good starting point for analyzing the way NFL teams choose to represent themselves to fans and consumers.

Acknowledgments

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How the Designs and Messages of Granola Bar and Cereal Packaging Have Changed Over 10 Years

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Abstract

Food companies strategically use packaging design to capture the attention of consumers and communicate their brand's messages. This study analyzed two brands' packaging design within the breakfast food categories of granola bars and cereal over a 10-year time period. The fronts of the packaging were analyzed based on four design elements—layout, colors, typography, and graphics—to describe any similarities and differences among the brand's messages and visuals. The findings indicated that brands used the packaging design to communicate specific messages and that those messages shift over time.

I. Introduction

This paper analyzed the food packaging of two popular breakfast food categories: granola bars and cereal. Within each of those categories, the researcher looked at two brands for a total of four products. For granola bars, the researcher examined Nature's Path Organic Sunny Hemp granola bar and Fiber One Oats & Chocolate chewy bar. For cereal, she focused on Kashi GOLEAN Crunch cereal and Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats cereal.

This paper described and analyzed the food packaging of the products in the breakfast food categories across three time periods: 10 years ago, 5 years ago and present day. To describe food-packaging trends through qualitative content analysis, this study examined granola bar and cereal packaging. This research chose these two particular food categories because granola bars and cereals are starting to separate in the market share for breakfast. For instance, granola bars are a part of a growing category of to-go foods. In 2015, "the North America on-the-go breakfast products market was valued at nearly $270 million, which is expected to reach nearly $330 million by 2021 end" (Future Market Insights, 2017). In contrast, the sale of cereal has "tumbled by almost 30% over the past 15 years, and their future remains uncertain" (Spence, 2017, p. 3).

As people move into adulthood, they are told breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Studies show that eating breakfast helps individuals keep their weight down, protects their hearts, and gives them a mental edge to start the day (Consumer Reports, 2015). In a world where breakfast matters, food companies

have to fight fiercely to reach consumers and tap into the breakfast market. A significant way in which companies can differentiate themselves from the competition is through food packaging. This includes the colors, typefaces, copy, and many other design elements to capture the consumer's attention, persuade them to place the food in their cart, and finally head to the checkout line.

The purpose of this research paper was to analyze the food packaging of two granola bar brands and two cereal brands over three different time periods. This paper used this analysis to note patterns apparent in the packaging design. These trends differed over past time periods in aspects such as layout and use of colors, typography, and graphics on the food package. While analyzing the packaging, the researcher also identified what those design patterns convey to the consumers. Therefore, this content analysis of packaging design gives an insight into the food-packaging world and how it has evolved over a period of 10 years for granola bars and cereals.

II. Literature Review

Background

Food packaging is formally defined as "the container that holds, protects, preserves and identifies the product, also facilitating its handling, storage and commercialization" (Eldesouky, Pulido, & Mesias, 2015, p. 361). It was created with a functional purpose—preservation and protection of the food—yet "subsequent evolutions have determined the transformation of food packaging into a communication media" (Brunazzi, Parisi, & Pereno, 2014, p. 18). Therefore, communication has become a major function of packaging design. Within this communication function lies brand design and, in this sense, "packaging has become part of the strategies that communicate to the consumer the essence of a brand" (Velasco, Salgado-Montejo, Marmolejo-Ramos, & Spence, 2014, p. 94). This brand design attribute also helps drive "consumer decision-making, because it allows consumers to draw inferences about the product, its attributes, or (in the case of foods and beverages) its taste" (Becker, Rompay, Schifferstein, & Galetzka, 2011, p. 17).

It is key for food companies to create persuasive and visually aesthetic packaging designs because "more than 70% of consumers make their choice of daily commodities in-store, 85% purchase without having picked up any alternative item and 90% make a purchase after only examining the front of the packaging and without having the product in the hand" (Clement, 2007, p. 917-918). Therefore, food companies need to "employ packaging to inform, persuade, and remind consumers that their respective products are better than those of other brands" to benefit their company's profitability, customer loyalty, and brand identity (Wang, 2013, p. 807).

Food Packaging Trends

Food-packaging design is ever evolving as the food industry and customers' preferences for food change. One of the most significant trends that has taken over for the food-packaging industry in the United States favors ready-to-eat foods since "77% of consumers prefer this type of product instead of traditional foods" (Brunazzi et al., 2014, p. 90). Millennials are partially responsible for this trend. They, for example, are more sensitive to over-packaging and "have no great loyalty to brands, so if a product disappoints they move on" (Robert, 2016, p. 9). This generation of consumers "expect, and demand, good functionality, such as effective "reclosability" of drinks and food packaging" (Robert, 2016, p. 9).

Millennials are also a big portion of single-person households for the U.S., which has "soared from 13% in 1960 to 28% in 2014, and the number of family households with children has declined by 21% in that same period" (Robert, 2016, p. 10). Therefore, this trend in downsizing "is driving demand for smaller-portion packets and more on-the-go, convenience-style packaging for food and drinks" (Robert, 2016, p. 10). Additionally, along with the trend of resealable packaging and easy-to-open/close features, food packaging also has explored complete transparency or minimally colored designs "to show the inner content to interested consumers" (Brunazzi et al., 2014, p. 19). However, "designers may propose completely coloured and/or printed FP [food packaging] with the aim of projecting most known and inviting attributes of packaged foods" (Brunazzi et al., 2014, p. 20).

Another trend is the increased desire to "diminish the environmental impacts of packaging by focusing

on issues such as lightweight materials, reusability and material selection" (Azzi, Battini, & Persona, 2012, p. 442). This is important since "packaging materials constitute as much as 65% of the global solid waste" (Azzi et al., 2012, p. 443). Moreover, there is a focus today on health "in relation to food choice and consumption, a particularly interesting question related to how packaging appearance can instill perceptions related to healthiness, and whether these transfer to taste" (Rompay, Deterink, & Fenko, 2016, p. 84-85). This change in eating habits has revealed a "search for products that are healthier" (Eldesouky et al., 2015, p. 360).

To promote this trend of health awareness, companies have developed a form of nutrition marketing. This idea is "front-of-package (FOP) labeling, which displays nutrients and/or objective health claims on the front of the package" (Bui, Kaltcheva, Patino, & Leventhal, 2013, p. 352). This labeling has become important for marketers since they can communicate the healthiness of the food product and help "consumers as they seek to gain information regarding products when making choices" (Bui et al., 2013, p. 352).

Lastly, with advancements in technology, the QR code emerged. This interactive tracking tool is best used when it is linked to "additional food facts, nutritional values, recipes, reviews, comparisons with competitors' products, discounts, deals and social media sites" (Drewe, 2014). It gives consumers more tools to learn about the healthiness of the food product.

Parts of Food Packaging Design

There are specific aspects to successful food-packaging design. For example, there is the visual communication that includes colors, images, and graphics as well as the actual "words in the package that explain the package brand, trademark, essential nutrients and other supporting contents" (Wu, 2015, p. 7). The format design, such as the layout, can help combine the visual and written cues to "follow consumer psychology and visual process" (p. 8). There also are different visual patterns to consider in food packaging, such as representational patterning, which includes a "representational graphic [that] can associate [a] figurative picture on the package with the real goods, which contributes to stimulate people's appetite in vision" (p. 9).

Moreover, different visuals influence consumer psychology. For example, food packaging with warm colors is "perceived as fruity, acidic and sweet, whereas packaging in cool and grey colours [is] seen as more closely related to menthol and spicy tastes" as well as "having more intense and long-lasting taste" (Rebollar, Lidón, Serrano, Martín, & Fernández, 2012, p. 168). Additionally, colors have an influence on consumers' willingness to buy since "consumers prefer packaging in warm colours, followed by cool colours and then by grey colours" (p. 168).

Consumer expectations are also influenced by the shape of the package, such as that "'sweet' tastes are better expressed by means of rounded shapes, typefaces, and names, and low-pitched sounds, whereas 'sour tastes' are better conveyed by means of angular shapes, typefaces, and names, and high-pitched sounds" (Velasco et al., 2014, p. 88). The shape of the packaging can also be broken down into "angular shapes [that] tend to induce associations with traits that express energy, toughness, and strength, whereas rounded shapes tend to induce perceptions of approachability, friendliness, and harmony" (Becker et al., 2011, p. 18). These results reveal that "various attributes of a product's packaging (e.g., its typeface and shape) can be used to help communicate specific product attributes and prepare the consumer for a particular consumption experience" (Velasco et al., 2014, p. 94).

All in all, scholarly work in the food-packaging industry has revealed how the industry has shifted from focusing on the functional requirements to the communication function of the packaging design. These scholarly works also touch on several trends, such as the increase of ready-to-eat foods and transparent packaging. Another noteworthy trend is the consumer's focus on healthier food options and searching for products that promote health awareness. A recent study acknowledged that a "natural reaction to ready-to-eat products can be easily observed and analyzed: the defense and promotion of natural (unpackaged, unprocessed) foods and the attention to 'fair trade' products can persuade a significant portion of people to abandon 'one-stop' shopping practices" (Brunazzi et al., 2014, p. 95). These trends help define what makes a successful food-packaging design. Recent studies have confirmed that "packaging shape and colour influence the consumer's sensory expectations" along with the typical visual cues such as graphics, colors, and layout (Rebollar et al., 2012, p. 162).

However, the existing literature on the packaging-design realm rarely looked at a specific food product, such as granola bars and how their packaging design has changed over time. This case analysis attempts to fill this gap by analyzing the design of two specific breakfast foods and their trends. This paper

contributes to the understanding of how food-packaging design has changed within the last 10-year period and what those design patterns may be conveying to the consumers. Lastly, the selection of two different brands within each of food category gives a variety of viewpoints for food-packaging design because the product's design can differ depending on the brand. The study raised the following two research questions:

RQ1: How are packages of granola bars and cereals communicating specific messages to potential buyers through visual and textual choices?

RQ2: How have those messages changed or not over time?

III. Methods

This study analyzed qualitatively two brands' food packaging in two breakfast food categories: granola bars and cereals. The three time points for analysis—10 years ago, 5 years ago and present day—were chosen because they are long enough to yield key differences and similarities in the visual elements and the messaging of the packaging. The examination of a brand's packaging throughout several years also helped explain why the brand's messages and visual appeals have changed or stayed the same based on consumer and food-industry trends. To simplify, the researcher refers to the 10-years-ago design as the 2007 design, the 5-years-ago design as the 2012 design, and the current design as the 2017 design.

The data analyzed the images of packages of two brands of granola bars and two brands of cereal. For granola bars, the research concentrated on Nature's Path Organic Sunny Hemp granola bar and Fiber One Oats & Chocolate chewy bar, while the cereal category looked at Kashi GOLEAN Crunch cereal and Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats. The food products were chosen based on a scale of healthy to unhealthy to have a broader viewpoint on the packaging design. For instance, Kashi GOLEAN Crunch is filled with high fiber and protein with Non-GMO whole ingredients, including "Kashi Seven Whole Grains And Sesame Blend (Whole: Hard Red Wheat, Brown Rice, Barley, Triticale, Oats, Rye, Buckwheat, Sesame Seeds)" (Kashi, 2017a). Whereas the Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats brand lists refined sugar as its second ingredient, along with harmful preservatives such as BHT (Kellogg Company, 2017).

Due to the lack of images of the entirety of the packaging for the older designs of 2007 and 2012, the research focused on the front of the packaging design. The researcher chose to follow the same format for the 2017 designs to be consistent with the analysis. As a result, only the front of the packaging was analyzed for each time point. The food packaging images over the years were collected from the internet. For the older images, the study relied on Google Images, the brand's website, and any articles noting the product designs at the time. To find the current product designs, the author went to grocery stores, looked at the food-packaging designs, and took pictures to analyze later.

The author created a code sheet to write notes on the key visual elements of the food packing, such as colors, typography, graphics or images, and the layout arrangement. After completing the notes, the author described what messages those visuals were communicating to the consumer through packaging designs throughout the years and compared the messages.

IV. Findings and Analysis

For the findings, the researcher chose to highlight the most prominent and biggest differences for each design element category: layout, colors, typography, and graphics. The researcher then explored differences among products across three time periods. The images used for analysis can be found in appendices: A) Granola Bars: Nature's Path Organic Sunny Hemp Granola Bar; B) Granola Bars: Fiber One Oats & Chocolate Chewy Bar; C) Cereal: Kashi GOLEAN Crunch Cereal; and D) Cereal: Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats Cereal.

Granola Bars: Nature's Path Organic Sunny Hemp Granola Bar

Layout: The layout stayed consistent, especially for the 2012 and 2017 design (Refer to Appendix A). Both designs centered the logo and the "organic" text at the top, while the middle featured all the graphics. There was a picture of the granola bar to the left and, to the right, there were photos of the granola bar ingredients, such as hemp seeds and rolled oats. The bottom featured the main text content, such as the product flavor, product description, and nutrition benefits. The 2012 and 2017 designs focused more on graphics rather than the written text, since the latter is pushed to the bottom. This layout could be trying to draw consumers in by focusing more on the food ingredients to capture the consumer's attention. For instance, the consumers' eyes will first see the granola bar and its ingredients; then they will follow the design down to the written content to learn more about the granola bar and consider if they want to purchase it. In contrast, the 2007 design has the written content front and center as the main attraction for consumers. The granola bar was pushed behind the text and to the bottom, prioritizing the text rather than the visuals in the 2007 packaging design.

Colors: The color scheme stayed similar for all three designs, but it was simplified throughout the years. The 2007 design used a green gradient background, in addition to light green, light brown, dark brown, yellow, black, and white colors for other areas. The 2012 design used dark green, light greens, white, yellow, and a dirt brown background. The current design changes to darker bright greens similar to grass, yellow, white, and a sand brown background**.** The current design also uses a new logo full of bright and earthy colors, while the 2007 and 2012 logos used dark shades of green, yellow, orange, white, and black. The current design features more earthy tones to create a healthy vibe. For instance, green is the color of nature, thus it is "used to promote 'green' or natural products," while yellow is associated with the sun, so it is connected with "cheer and springtime," which is a perfect way to create an earthy vibe for the Nature's Path packaging (Rodin, 2015). The 2017 design reflects the trend of earthy tones since the Pantone Color Institute announced its 2017 color of the year is greenery, which was "crafted based on the theme of nature" along with associated words of "refresh, revive, restore, renew, replenish, regenerate and reinvigorate" (Hua, 2016). Nature's Path is capitalizing on this trend to make consumers believe that the granola bars are healthy.

Typography: The typography made a substantial shift over the years, particularly the 2007 design versus the 2012 and 2017 designs. The 2007 design used a retro and chunky sans serif typeface with a traditional serif typeface. However, the 2012 and 2017 designs shifted to a modern sans serif typeface that varied in contrast to create visual hierarchy. This sans serif typeface also gives a friendly and healthy vibe since it is a progressive sans serif with monospacing. The logo typography also changed over the years. The 2007 and 2012 designs used a thin traditional serif typeface, whereas the 2017 design uses the same progressive sans serif it used for the written content. The 2017 design draws consumers in because it incorporates a simple design of one typeface that varies in weight to create a welcoming and modern feel. Nature's Path's embrace of "simplicity makes it stand out in a crowded marketplace" (Ahmad & Ahmad, 2015, p. 95).

Graphics: All designs used minimal graphics. The main graphics were the granola bar, USDA Organic seal, logo, and a background of multiple plants. However, some of these elements changed over the years. For instance, the logo has been simplified. The 2007 and 2012 logos included three wheat stalks inside each side of the green oval logo, while the current logo uses only one wheat stalk without the stem on each side. The 2017 design also cleans up the logo by including the text "organic" at its bottom— so the word doesn't need to appear again. The 2017 logo follows the design trend of minimalism. Additionally, the background graphics of plants turned more elegant and artsy throughout the packaging to also emulate a clean vibe.

Lastly, the biggest change over the years was the addition of the granola bar ingredients on the 2012 and 2017 designs. These up-close images of the ingredients labeled the granola bar as a healthy choice because it showed real foods with no preservatives or additives. The addition of the ingredients also showed consumers that the company is transparent with nutrition. Therefore, the 2012 and 2017 designs capitalized on the "new good consumer [who] is moving towards fresher, cleaner labels and transparency is king" (Kell, 2016). In contrast, the 2007 design's granola bar graphic appealed to the consumer's taste buds since it focused on the gooiness of the granola bar rather than its ingredients.

Granola Bars: Fiber One Oats and Chocolate Chewy Bar

Layout: The layout stayed fairly consistent each year, particularly for the 2007 and 2012 designs (Refer to Appendix B). The designs kept a blue bar on the top that contained the product flavor in the right corner and the General Mills logo in the left corner. The 2017 design replaces this information with the Facts Up Front graphic in the right corner with more nutrition information, such as no artificial preservatives in the left corner. The layout shift could be attributed to the food industry's push to increase healthy options and eliminate preservatives. Today's informed consumers are demanding more from the foods they eat, and "foods with a short list of recognizable ingredients resonate strongly, so savvy manufacturers are responding to this trend by modifying product portfolios by simplifying food ingredient lists and creating natural and organic alternatives" (Nielsen, 2016). The 2017 layout responds to this trend by giving consumers what they want: more transparency with nutrition information.

The center shared similarities for each design. The Fiber One logo was toward the left with a granola bar to the right, and a fiber statement with nutrition benefits toward the center bottom; however, the written content decreased each year. For instance, the 2007 design featured three nutrition statements, but the 2012 and 2017 designs used only one. This decrease may be because Fiber One decided these statements were not as important as the new nutrition information and the Fact Up Front graphic for the 2017 design. Fiber One matches the trend of being transparent with ingredients and labels itself as a healthy alternative for consumers. Lastly, similar to 2012 and 2017 Nature's Path layouts, the 2017 layout also pushed the main written content to the bottom. The 2017 design also focuses more on graphics rather than written content to first capture the consumer's attention with the food visuals.

Typography: The typography stayed similar for the 2007 and 2012 designs; however, it shifted to a more friendly and flexible typography in 2017. For instance, the older logos used a transitional serif typeface with a plain and traditional vibe. In contrast, the 2017 logo changed to a flowing and casual brush script that creates a friendly feeling that fits a healthier style, thus sending a message to the consumers that Fiber One is a healthy choice. Each of the designs used a sans serif typeface for the main written content; however, the 2017 design uses a more dynamic sans serif that capitalizes on simplicity. The older designs mainly changed the typography color and size to create contrast; however, the 2017 design changes the typeface weight and size to create visual hierarchy and uses only one color. This follows the minimalism trend by streamlining the typography contrast to "create focus on a simple framework and emphasis on the "right" content within the design to shift consumer's attention to the packaging's most important content" (Cousins, 2015).

Colors: The 2007 and 2012 color schemes were similar but the colors were simplified each year. For instance, the 2007 design used light pink, dark blue, white, bright green, dark yellow, and a light yellow gradient background. The 2012 design incorporated dark blue, white, dark yellow, and a pale yellow background, while the 2017 design uses only white, a light sand background, and a light ocean blue. Fiber One follows Nature's Path 2017 design by utilizing more earthy colors and fewer colors.

The logo colors are also simplified for the current design. The 2007 and 2012 logos used dark chocolate brown for the word "fiber" and "chewy bars," and a dark reddish-orange for the word "one." The dark color palette mimicked fall colors, while the 2017 logo shifts to a single bright red that brings more energy to the packaging. This shift to simplicity and to bright red could motivate consumers to take action since red "brings text and images to the foreground and it is used to stimulate people to make quick decisions" (Rodin, 2015). Fiber One uses bright blue for the written content to create balance since "the color blue is more cerebral and evokes a sense of responsibility, tending to encourage people to be on their best behavior, thereby unconsciously influencing consumers to believe the blue-packaged product is healthier (e.g., low fat) than products packaged in other colors (e.g., red)" (Huang & Lu, 2016, p. 212). Therefore, Fiber One seems to strategically incorporate blue to make sure consumers see the granola bar as healthy.

Graphics: The main graphic was the granola bar for each design; however, older designs include a broken bar, revealing its gooiness. The 2017 design keeps the bar in one piece. Next to the granola bar, the 2007 and 2012 designs included chocolate shavings, but the 2017 design adds the main ingredients like oats and chunks of dark chocolate. Like Nature's Path 2012 and 2017 designs, Fiber One 2017 design marks the granola bar as healthy since the main ingredients are shown to the consumers.

Smaller graphics that help with this transparency are the white diamonds around the "no" for all the artificial flavors, and colors which is "in response to consumers' changing preferences since in 2015 General Mills committed to removing artificial flavors and colors from artificial sources" (General Mills, 2016). These

graphics highlight the clean ingredients to attract consumers who are seeking a healthier option. Lastly, the graphic that holds the fiber statement has changed in shape and size. In the 2007 and 2012 designs, the fiber statement is in a large blue rectangle, but the 2017 design reduces its size and places it in a tiny blue diamond. As a result, the 2017 design focuses more on the graphics of the granola bar and its ingredients rather than the written content to attract consumers to look at the package.

Cer*eal: Kashi GOLEAN Crunch Cereal*

Layout: The layout was similar for the 2007 and 2012 designs, but the 2017 design breaks this mold, as shown in Appendix C. The 2007 and 2012 logos were centered at the top while the main written content was in the middle, and the picture of the cereal was on the bottom. The older designs focused more on the text rather than the image of the actual cereal since the text is centered and is the biggest element. However, the 2017 design moves the cereal to the top with the logo and pulls the main text to the bottom. The nutrition values are still in the middle, thus consumers' eyes follow the picture of the cereal down to the hearty and healthy nutritional values. The 2017 design shows that "good clean food deserves good clean design" by keeping the layout simple with a "clean white canvas and accented with a design that is unmistakably contemporary – with clean lines, vivid colors and straightforward typography" (PRNewsWire, 2016). Thus, consumers focus on the vibrant ingredients and the clean nutrition values, and perhaps see the cereal as a healthy choice.

Colors: The color scheme stayed consistent, but it was simplified each year. For instance, the 2007 design used maroon, white, bright red, yellow, and orange. The 2012 design incorporated maroon, white, bright red, yellow, and adds green, while the 2017 design only uses maroon and white. Kashi follows the pattern of simplifying its color scheme to attract consumers with the minimalist design. Additionally, the logo was always green, yet the shade changes for the 2017 design. The 2007 and 2012 logos featured dark green and white, but the current logo only uses light green to simplify the logo and give it more energy. The green also gives an environmental feel, which is key because Kashi hopes consumers to associate the brand with nature and health since Kashi "values not just foods [they] make, but also how [they] make them by being progressive and mindful of sustainable and ethical farming practices" (Kashi, 2017b).

Typography: Kashi's typography incorporated a mix of sans serif and serif typefaces for the 2007 design while the newer designs simplified the typography. The 2012 design used one serif and sans serif typeface while the 2017 design uses a thin and modern sans serif typeface, except for the logo, which has always been a serif typeface. The simple and modern typography goes along with Kashi's vision of progressive food values since the brand is creating an "entire portfolio of Non-GMO Project Verified products and ever-increasing organic offering" (PRNewsWire, 2016). Kashi uses typography to highlights its roots and persuade consumers to choose Kashi for a nutritious and high quality cereal. The 2017 design also shakes up its layout, flipping the orientation of the product type text, "GoLean," to be on a vertical plane. This shift in orientation can capture the consumer's attention since it differs from the normal packaging designs of the cereals surrounding it.

Graphics: The 2017 logo follows the minimalistic trend incorporating a plain bright green for the main text and a lighter bright green for the wheat stalk, while the old logos used a dark green box with an uneven border that contained the white text and wheat stalk. The wobbly wheat stalk in the older designs was shaky and uneven, but the 2017 design smooths it out and makes it a different color from the text to improve the readability and crispness. This increase in smoothness could make Kashi feel more natural and innovative to consumers since the logo flows more naturally.

Moreover, the picture of the cereal changed over the years. The 2007 design featured a bowl of milk, blueberries, and cereal clusters jumping out of the bowl. The 2012 design removes the bowl but the cereal clusters were still jumping out with the milk and blueberries. The 2017 design does not have a bowl, milk, or blueberries, and it just includes the cereal clusters. Thus, the 2017 design focuses more on the cereal to showcase its high quality. Lastly, the 2017 design adds the GMO Free sticker, while the other designs lacked this certification to show consumers that Kashi is making strides to become more natural and healthy.

Cereal: Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats Cereal

Layout: Frosted Mini-Wheats followed a similar layout for each time period, as shown in Appendix D. For instance, the Kellogg's logo was at the top while the Frosted Mini-Wheats logo was centered in the

middle along with the main written content, and the bottom featured the bowl of Frosted Mini-Wheats. The lack of layout change showed that the logo and product information were the most important information since they were centered in the middle and were the biggest elements. Frosted Mini-Wheats may be attracting consumers with its name because it is a popular cereal that is one of the top-10 best-selling cereals in the United States. Then it seals the deal when the consumers look down at the Frosted Mini-Wheats name (Ferdman, 2015).

Colors: The main colors were always orange, white, blue, green, and red. Like the other designs, its color scheme was simplified to follow the minimalism trend "by infusing bright colors with traditional neutral backgrounds" (McCready, 2017). The color scheme also used more vibrant colors for each design. The 2017 design's bright colors create a playful and fun vibe that encourages the adult consumers to think of their childhood, given that children "gravitate towards bright neon-like colors and more complex color combinations" (Reiher & Acuff, 2008, p. 185). The color scheme matched Frosted Mini-Wheats marketing, since Frosted Mini-Wheats boasted that it feeds the consumer's inner kid (Kellogg Company, 2016).

The logo design was also simplified for each time period. For example, the 2007 design used a dark blue gradient, beveled border, and a white shadow around the text. The 2012 design, in contrast, used a lighter solid blue, but it still had a beveled border and added a black shadow to it. The current design uses a brighter blue that has a subtler border with a contrasting orange outline to make it appear flatter and minimalistic.

Typography: The logo used a display font to capture the attention of the consumer: a decorative wheat stalk that completed the crossbar for the "t." The logo was also strategic in the typography size: The size of "mini-wheats" was considerably larger than the word "frosted" to portray the cereal as healthy by downplaying the sugar content. The main content for each time period used a sans serif typeface that mixed font weights, colors, uppercase letters and capital letters to create more contrast. The 2007 design used a plain and modern sans serif to create a stable and straightforward design, while the 2012 and 2017 designs incorporated a more friendly and clean sans serif to reveal to consumers that the cereal is kid-friendly.

Graphics: There was always a small Frosted Mini-Wheats character, but the character differed for each design. The 2007 and 2017 designs included an animated Frosted Mini-Wheat character looking at the consumer, but the 2012 design used a non-animated mini-wheat. The animated character could draw in kids because "cereal box spokes-characters that make eye contact may indeed increase positive feelings towards the product, as well inducing choice over other products" (Musicus, Tal, & Wansink, 2015, p. 724). The non-animated Frosted Mini-Wheat catered to both children and adult consumers by showing off the two sides of the biscuit: whole grains for the adults and sweet frosting for the kids.

Like Kashi's design, Frosted Mini-Wheats used a bowl of cereal that changed with each design. The 2007 design had a blue bowl of milk, Frosted Mini-Wheats, and raspberries. The 2012 and 2017 designs included a white bowl of Frosted Mini-Wheats and milk only. Similar to the Fiber One bars, Frosted Mini-Wheats used the Fact Up Front graphic in each of the designs to attract consumers by being transparent with its nutritional breakdown (Kellogg Company, 2015).

V. Conclusion

Several conclusions for each of the categories can be reached based on the findings. For the category of granola bars, the Nature's Path Organic Sunny Hemp bar and the Fiber One Oats and Chocolate Chewy bar shared several similarities in design and the messages they promoted because of the design strategies. For the layout, as the years progressed, the main written content was shifted down to the bottom while the focus was put more strongly on the graphics. For all the time periods, the logo usually stayed in the same place, either centered or at the top, since it is an easy area to spot, so consumers knew the brand of the product immediately.

For the typography, each of the designs moved to more sans serif typefaces and simplified them to create visual hierarchy with size and contrast rather than with color and different typefaces. This visual hierarchy allowed the product to highlight the most important written content, guiding the consumers' eyes to the information the company wanted the consumer to read. Moreover, the colors shifted to more earthy tones as the designs progressed—such as greens for Nature's Path and blues for Fiber One. The color schemes and background designs were also simplified to attract consumers with a calming and welcoming vibe, since

they conveyed the brand's message, such as nature and health for Nature's Path. Lastly, regarding graphics, there was always a picture of the granola bar; however, as the years went on, there was a trend of showing the ingredients of the granola bar. This trend allowed products to show themselves as healthy and whole nutritious foods, instead of fake or artificial ingredients. The logo for the newer designs also changed to look more friendly and minimal.

The findings also revealed some of the main similarities for each of the cereals (Kashi GOLEAN Crunch and Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats). For instance, there was a basic layout of the brand's logo at the top, the main written content centered in the middle, and the picture of the cereal at the bottom for each of the time periods. For the typography, each of the products shifted to more sans serif typefaces and used a mix of colors, sizes and weight to create visual hierarchy and to reflect the brand's message. However, both cereal designs never used multiple typefaces to create contrast, which the granola bars did. The number of colors and their styles were simplified, such as with no shadows or gradients. Also, the colors for each product matched the feel that the brand wanted the consumer to feel, such as health and nature's roots for Kashi and playfulness and kid-like feelings for Frosted Mini-Wheats. Finally, the graphics shared a picture of the cereal usually in a bowl with milk or fruit for older designs, but not the 2017 designs. Kashi only uses the cereal clusters while Frosted Mini-Wheats uses the mini-wheats in a bowl of milk. This simplification allowed the consumer to focus on the food and its clean and yummy ingredients. Similarly, the logos also reflected a simple and minimalist design: the number of colors decreased, the colors were brightened, and the typography was smoothed out to be more readable.

In summary, all these designs and their evolutions over time speak of the importance of packaging as a communication tactic. They were used as a way to convey certain brand images to the customer through the use of layouts, fonts, graphics and colors, as well as communicate support for a trend, for instance, a minimalistic approach to healthier food choices.

Key limitations of this content analysis include the difficulty of finding images for the early years, particularly the 2007 designs. When the researcher found an image in an article on various websites, she traced the time of the image based on the date stamp of the article. To ensure its validity, the researcher reached out to companies for pictures, but they neither respond nor pointed the researcher in helpful directions. They showed only annual reports or different parts of websites that did not contain pictures of the packaging design for those specific years. Therefore, future researchers may want to partner with these companies or allow for more time to work with these companies to find these old images.

Additionally, future research could focus more on specific parts of the packaging. The researcher looked at four different design elements, but future research could focus on one or two things for more in-depth analysis. Future researchers could also pick a different food category or look at different brands within granola bars and cereal products to find any similarities or differences in comparison with this research paper. Lastly, future research could still look at the packaging design for different time periods, but also look at the food industry trends for each packaging design time period to examine if the trends dictate the company's design elements and choices. This could present new insights into how packaging design matches food industry trends and messages.

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Appendix A: Nature's Path Sunny Hemp Granola Bar

Figure 1: Nature's Path 2007 Design

Figure 2: Nature's Path 2012 Design

Figure 3: Nature's Path 2017 Design

Appendix B: Fiber One Oats & Chocolate Chewy Bar

Figure 4: Fiber One 2007 Design

Figure 5: Fiber One 2012 Design

Figure 6: Fiber One 2017 Design

Appendix C: Kashi GOLEAN Crunch Cereal

Figure 7: Kashi 2007 Design

Figure 8: Kashi 2012 Design

Figure 9: Kashi 2017 Design

Appendix D: Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats Cereal

Figure 10: Mini-Wheats 2007 Design

Figure 11: Mini-Wheats 2012 Design

Figure 12: Mini-Wheats 2017 Design

An Exploration into the Effect of Advancing Technology on UX of Social Media Applications

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Abstract

While the development of technology and its impact on the social media space may seem unclear, one idea is widely agreed upon: The ways individuals use and interact with social media applications will change dramatically as technologies infiltrate the space. This study explored how evolving technologies will impact the user experience (UX) of social media applications. Three interviews were conducted with futurists and members of Elon communications faculty, as well as a thorough case study of Facebook's 2017 F8 conference. Findings suggest that evolving technology will rapidly transform the components of the UX framework and enhance consumer convenience, but may create challenges with corporate trust.

I. Introduction

Since the inception of the smartphone in the mid-1990s, the world of digital media has exploded in growth and continues to evolve at a frantic rate. The advancements in consumer technology have been principal driving forces behind the diversifying social media landscape. However, the rise of technologies like augmented reality, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence have prompted essential questions surrounding the effect of technological advancement on user experience and human culture as a whole.

When Facebook launched and quickly gained popularity in 2004, the social networking website altered the media landscape. Facebook set the bar for similar social media applications to provide new ways for users to engage with and connect to one another. Flash forward to 2017, the social media space has become congested with applications bidding to carve out their unique place in users' lives. As social media has gained more and more prominence in consumer culture, brands have recognized these channels as valuable marketing opportunities. This paper explored the impact evolving technology will have on the UX via social media applications, and how social media marketing will be affected by this change.

II. Literature Review

Social media can be defined as "the interactive platforms generated by mobile and web-based technologies on which individuals and communities can share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. Social media platforms can include blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds" (Carr & Hayes, 2015). As advanced technologies continue to evolve, the UX of social media applications utilizing these technologies is bound to change. This literature review explored the brief, yet eventful history of social media, and discussed the conceptual framework of UX and its growing importance in application design. By examining the origins of social media, one will be able to gain a deeper understanding of where the field's future.

The History of Social Media: Four Big Players Enter the Space

The first social media platform, such as bulletin board systems, appeared in 1978 and offered simple text content posting and communication. After the World Wide Web gained traction in the 1990s, new-age social media applications like user forums allowed users to generate and publish personal content online (Carr & Hayes, 2015). Following the web's explosion in popularity, Palm Computing released the first mobile device capable of offering location-based services, the Palm VII PDA, in May 1999 (Kaplan, 2012). The device allowed users to obtain zip code-based information and browse the web, revealing the budding potential of mobile Internet connectivity.

Following such early advances in mobile computing, the world of mobile social media truly expanded when Apple released the iPhone in 2007, providing its now 100 million users access to more than 250,000 smartphone applications (Kaplan, 2012). Through harnessing the power of location-tracking technology and the flourishing network of mobile device owners, companies like Gowalla and Foursquare launched early mobile social media applications allowing users to "check in" at locations and share their visits with friends (Kaplan, 2012).

In the early 2000s, the term "Web 2.0" was coined to describe the internet's evolution from "static repository of information to a dynamic and interactive platform for collaboration using web functions, such as wikis, blogs, media sharing, and social networking sites" (Everett & Rivera, 2014). Rapid advances in communicative and information aggregation technologies allowed Web 2.0 to provide users with a more interactive experience than ever before. In 2004, Facebook was born as a social networking platform exclusively for college students. Since its inception, Facebook has garnered more than 1.15 billion active users, offering an incredibly efficient medium for sharing textual, photo, audio, and video content (Everett & Rivera, 2014). The social media website quickly penetrated the young adult market, revealing an early demand for mobile social media networks.

When Twitter entered the scene in 2006, it quickly gained popularity among internet users for its simple yet addictive micro-blogging interface. Through 140 character messages, users were able to share their everyday thoughts, opinions, and stories. Furthermore, with almost 200 million users worldwide and nearly 460,000 new accounts each day, Twitter continues to dominate the social media space and offers unique opportunities in news publishing (Lin, Hoffman, & Borengasser, 2013). Following Twitter, Instagram, a photo-sharing application, was launched in 2010, providing users an "instantaneous way to capture and share their life moments with friends through a series of (filter manipulated) pictures and videos" (Hu, Manikonda, & Kambhampati 2014). Instagram revolutionized photo sharing in the social media space, offering a platform dedicated to posting and sharing photo content through an individual's personal feed. The application didn't go unnoticed, gaining more than 150 million active users, with more than 16 billion photos shared so far. In 2012, Facebook bought Instagram, further solidifying its domination of the thriving social media world (Hu *et al.,* 2014).

In recent years a new trend in the social media space has emerged: ephemeral media sharing applications. Snapchat, a social media application, allows users to send text, photo, and video content that disappear after a short time to friends. Besides Snapchat, these new ephemeral social media applications include Yik Yak and Slingshot (Bayer, Ellison, Schoenebeck, & Falk, 2015). Conceptualized in 2012, Snapchat was one of the first social media applications designed to transmit content that disappears after a period of time predetermined by the user. Upon its growth in notoriety, Snapchat presents a level of novelty not available before in the social media space. In July 2014, Snapchat rolled out a new feature, geofilters, to the social media platform. Geofilters allow users to overlay location-based graphics on pictures or videos,

providing a fun way for users to share experiences with friends. With currently 158 million people using the app every day, Snapchat has become a prominent ephemeral social media application and continues to offer users exciting new features. (Bayer *et al.,* 2015)

Defining UX

User experience, referred to as UX, describes the ease of use and thoughtfulness of design regarding social media applications. "Ambient Media Today and Tomorrow" asserts that UX has four independent elements: branding, usability, content, and functionality (Lugmayr, Serral, Scherp, Pogorelc & Mustaquim, 2013). While the body of literature about the concept of UX is still growing, the framework remains an increasingly important aspect of social media application design. According to the website of Nielsen Norman Group, a leading UX research, training, and consulting organization, "True user experience goes far beyond giving customers what they say they want, or providing checklist features. In order to achieve high-quality user experience in a company's offerings, there must be a seamless merging of the services of multiple disciplines, including engineering, marketing, graphical and industrial design, and interface design." Nielsen Norman Group notes that exceptional user experience must meet the exact needs of the customer, and involve a level of simplicity, elegance, and joy (Nielsen Norman Group, 2016).

Advanced Technologies Emerge in Media and Consumer Culture

While technologies like augmented reality and the Internet of Things once seemed futuristic and incomprehensible, such advancements are beginning to emerge in the design of consumer products and social media applications. According to Centric Digital, augmented reality "allows us to use our devices as viewpoints for observing the world around us in real time, while receiving additional information superimposed on that real-world view" (Alvarez, 2017). Essentially, augmented reality overlays digital content onto a user's actual environment, and virtual reality completely immerses the user in a digital environment (Pavlik & Bridges, 2013).

About a year after Snapchat's addition of geofilters, the social media application became one of the first to use augmented reality technology in a new feature called Lenses (Bayer et al., 2016). Lenses allow users to overlay digital images and camera effects on pictures of themselves and others. Using facial recognition, the user's smartphone camera identifies his or her facial features and applies the chosen effect accordingly. As of late, users are even able to apply Lenses to their real world environments, genuinely meshing users' natural and digital realities into one interactive interface (Bayer et al., 2016).

The Internet of Things (IoT) is another advancement that has recently infiltrated the consumer technology market. The Internet of Things "incorporates billions of devices (such as cameras, sensors, RFIDs, smartphones, and wearables) that are owned by different organizations and people who are deploying and using them for their own purposes" (Georgakopoulos & Jayaraman, 2016). The Internet of Things is an invisible digital fabric of connected devices, such as smart wearables, fitness trackers, smart pills, and automobile sensors, allowing semi-autonomous and autonomous driving capabilities (Georgakopoulos & Jayaraman, 2016).

IoT-equipped smart home devices, such as Amazon's Alexa and Google Home, have recently entered the consumer tech market and gained attention for providing heightened convenience to users. These smarthome devices utilize the power of IoT to assist users with everyday activities—from ordering an Uber to adjusting the thermostat or playing a song—all through a central, internet-connected console. While the body of literature surrounding the IoT is minute, innovations like Amazon Alexa and Google Home show great promise concerning future applications of IoT in consumer products (Georgakopoulos & Jayaraman, 2016).

Advanced technology, such as augmented and virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things, are beginning to emerge in products and services consumers use daily. However, in order to predict how the continued advancement of such technologies will affect the future of social media UX, it's crucial to gather deeper insights in this area of study.

The following three research questions were asked:

RQ1.How will advancing technologies continue to shape the UX of social media applications?

RQ2: What positive and negative implications might technological evolution have on the utility of social networking applications?

RQ3: How will the evolution and diversification of the social media landscape affect marketing?

RQ4: What opportunities might new technologies provide to marketers?

III. Methods

This research was conducted through three interviews with futurists and communications professionals, a case study on Facebook's F8 Conference, and secondary research collected from Pew Research Center's "Digital Life in 2025" report.

Informational Interviews

Informational interviews were conducted with two futurists and members of Elon communications faculty – Qian Xu and Janna Anderson. Xu's research interests center around the social and psychological effects of online technology regarding user perception, information seeking behaviors, and cognition. Her teaching expertise includes interactive media, social media strategy, and user experience. Xu's interview explored the framework of UX, including psychological elements involved and her predictions on how this framework will change with evolving technology.

Anderson is the director of the Imagining the Internet Center at Elon, an initiative that conducts research on the future of communicative technology. She is also a contract researcher for Pew Research Center's Internet, Science, and Technology Project, where she researched the future of 50 internet-related topics and co-authored several studies exploring the future of digital life. Anderson's interview delved into how social media is shaping the way consumers live, work, study, and recreate. She provided insights into the negative implications that may arise out of social media's growing capabilities.

Lastly, Tom Cheesewright is a renowned UK-based futurist and corporate consultant. Cheesewright is the founder of the consulting firm Book of the Future, which aims to help organizations see, share, and respond to the future. With nearly 14,000 followers on Twitter, he is an esteemed futurist and consultant in the communications field. He works with marketing agencies and brands to develop strategic campaign content with the future in mind. Cheesewright also created the Applied Futurist's Toolkit for marketing agencies, management consultants, accounting firms, and organizations of all kinds (personal communication, April 4, 2017).

Case Study: Facebook F8 Developers Conference

Since Facebook has proved to be a leader in social media innovation, we may predict the future of the social media landscape by examining its current development strategies. Throughout its existence, Facebook has led the charge for innovation in the social media world. The Facebook platform was the first of its kind, offering users the ability to browse and connect with friends' profiles online (McCole, Everett & Rivera, 2014). Since its rise to popularity, Facebook has remained at the forefront of emerging technology and a leader in the social media space. This case study looked at Facebook's F8 conference, an annual conference held by Facebook for developers and companies that build services and products around its website.

IV. Findings

Evolution of UX Framework based on an interview with Qian Xu

While UX is a relatively new construct in social media application design, the conceptual framework of UX has evolved slightly as applications have grown in structural complexity. According to Xu, "In the past, it [user experience] has just been about ease of use, but now with augmented and virtual reality . . . there is a learning curve involved with adapting these new technologies" (Xu, personal communication, April 12, 2017). Due to the infiltration of advanced technologies into social media apps, UX now involves many different aspects, including ease of use, usability, the satisfaction of the experience, and emotional response. Xu also noted that one of the challenges developers have faced with creating a positive UX is the hesitation associated with the learning curve of advanced features. However, despite any initial anxiety with learning how to use the new technology, Xu said, "Because of the application's novelty, users will not be afraid to actually overcome this learning curve to enjoy exploring something that is new and that doesn't exist already."

According to Xu, future UX design will require the incorporation of two aspects: hedonism and utilitarianism. Hedonism, defined as the "pursuit of pleasure" (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.) encompasses the fun, engaging, novel aspects of an application feature. An example of a social media feature with a large hedonic influence is Snapchat Lenses, which allows users to overlay virtual camera effects onto pictures. Conversely, utilitarianism is defined as something being designed to be useful and practical rather than attractive (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.). Facebook, for example, is most known for its features that boast utility. The platform was one of the first to allow users to interact with each other by posting on each other's walls, sending each other pictures, and even sending each other gifts. In addition, future application UX design will need to offer users value in order to push them over the learning curve. She said, "All of the augmented reality and virtual reality developments, as well as Facebook's live-streaming and 360-degree video, pose some sort of learning challenge users have to overcome. But because each of these advances will be able to introduce something new, the novelty of it will help alleviate anxiety and initial frustration with the interface."

Furthermore, Xu asserted that new application features must offer users something new to achieve longevity and retain positive UX. Additionally, she said an application that unveils a new feature that hadn't existed before has the "first mover advantage." Snapchat Stories are a prime example of this concept. Since Snapchat's feature provided users with a fun and useful capability that never before existed, it became popular quickly. She said, "When you think about the longevity of a product or a feature of an interface, if the novelty of it can actually last and continue to engage users, the technology may be able to survive long term." Using Snapchat as another example, she stated, "When Snapchat released Lenses and Geofilters, I played with them myself . . . Initially it was so fun . . . but unless Snapchat actually introduces something new or enhances the Lenses feature, then it may fizzle out because it offers nothing beyond the novelty" (Xu, 2017).

Xu also predicted that the future framework of UX would be driven by developers' ability to deliver enhanced connectivity to users. To illustrate this idea, she discussed Facebook's recent launch of its live streaming feature. Through Facebook Live, users can view news events as they happen, and contribute to the broadcast in real time by posting comments and sending emotions on the live stream. She said, "Live streaming seems to be pretty successful, and the fact that you can send the live emotions is going to provide a very integrated experience. It's going to change people's viewing habits." The feature is something new in the realms of social media, which is a reason it has seen so much popularity among users.

UX will continue to evolve as a new digital environment emerges with advancements in AR and VR. According to Xu, UX will not remain a 2-dimensional concept. She said there are multiple aspects associated with user experience, and emerging technology will bring new aspects and emphasize certain aspects that already exist. Xu said, "You will be able to find something different with UX for websites and UX for applications . . . you have to take into consideration the environment." As mobile-applicable advances take hold of social media application design, the construct of mobile UX is certain to change.

Implications for the future of Social Media UX

The internet will eventually become deeply ingrained in users' digital environment, to a point where users won't have to go on a laptop or smartphone to access information. Anderson said the information would soon be integrated into users' surroundings through AR glasses or lenses (Anderson, personal communication, April 12, 2017). To further examine what the future of social media UX may look like in

light of such advances, one must explore a case study surrounding the leader of technological innovation in the social media space – Facebook. As discussed in the literature review, Facebook was and remains a pioneering platform for users to post, share, and experience information and media. At the company's recent F8 Conference, CEO Mark Zuckerberg presented many groundbreaking developments involving technologies never before utilized in the social media space.

Zuckerberg first announced Facebook will launch a camera platform built on the capabilities of augmented reality. Developers will be able to create augmented reality masks and effects, and users will be able to use their smartphone camera to see these effects over their environment (Newton, 2017). Facebook will also be one of the first social media applications to integrate virtual reality into application design. The platform will roll out a supposedly "bold and bizarre" VR hangout app available on the Oculus Rift (Statt, 2017). Additionally, Facebook plans to use artificial intelligence algorithms to provide users with more useful capabilities. For example, the company is using AI to help devices understand what's being captured by the user's camera. From there, artificial intelligent algorithms will be able to identify a user's background in a photo and automatically blur the background in real time (Newton, 2017).

During the F8 conference, Zuckerberg unveiled a new 360 video camera called Surround 360. The camera will reach the consumer market in two versions – a smaller, more portable camera with six cameras, and a larger camera with 24 cameras (Statt, 2017). The cameras will be able to capture every dimension of the users' environment, allowing users to move anywhere so long as they are wearing the Oculus Rift VR headset (Statt, 2017).

The platform's plans go beyond the scope of augmented and virtual reality. Facebook also announced its working on a "brain-computer interface" that will allow users to type with their thoughts (Statt, 2017). Facebook officials refer to the technology as a "brain mouse for AR" and hope to make the interface a "speech prosthetic," where users will not have to move their hands to select a digital object – they will just think to do it (Statt, 2017). Among others, Facebook plans to explore technology that would allow users to hear through the skin, send and share VR experiences with friends, and create an "app store" featuring different bots, essentially automated messaging systems built to assist users with needs (Garun, 2017).

Although such promises seem enthralling, Anderson outlined how security concerns and user-related issues may slow the process of mass user adoption of these new technologies. She said that a significant reason people might be hesitant to adopt a new technology is trust. "There are trust issues," she said (Anderson, personal communication, 2017). "Part of this does have to do with the technology itself, and some of it has to do with human uses of the technology because people are trusting technology less." AI-equipped devices, for example, can perform a variety of functions for users, offering a level of utility not seen before in the consumer tech market. However, people are becoming weary of these smart devices collecting information they don't want collected, leading them to reject artificial intelligence as a useful technology (Anderson, 2017).

A concern that has already arisen from technology's impending influence in smartphone design is the risk of feeling that there is no escape from the flurry of augmented information and visuals (Anderson, 2017). To the user, being surrounded by a layer of digital information on top of his or her true environment may seem too overwhelming or over-stimulating. She added, "Virtual reality and augmented reality are going to make social media possibly more 'in your face,' which can be good if it's something you want, but bad if it's something you don't want." In addition, the constant evolution of social media platforms' complexity might be a driving force in turning previously enthusiastic users away. She said, "People might initially push back against it and try to get away from the technology . . . we see it a little bit already with the youth participation in Snapchat rather than Facebook. Snapchat has taken the place of email and Facebook, and now young people are only using Snapchat and texting because it's more private" (Anderson, 2017).

Although such predictions may seem less optimistic, Anderson asserted that technologies are likely to succeed in the framework of UX if they incorporate three features: low-friction communication, expediency of exchange, and high value proposition. She provided an example of the mass adoption of smartphones in the 2000s. "The smartphone was adopted more quickly than any technology before it because people saw the value in the technology," she said (Anderson, 2017). "Now, everyone wants to be connected all the time, and it doesn't have to do with the fact that they can just send text messages or call someone with it – it is incredibly versatile. Consumers saw the value in being able to access the internet from virtually any location" (Anderson, 2017). Xu and Anderson agree that expediency in each human-computer exchange is also an important factor. Xu said, "For mobile devices, you know that you are always on the go and your attention

span will be really short, so it's going to be important to take these into consideration when UX designers think about new apps and features in the future" (Xu, 2017).

Predictions for Future of Marketing Through Social

The social media field has undoubtedly become a gold mine for digital marketers. As the field continues to change in light of technological advancement, marketers will get the highest return on investment if they stay in tune with such changes (Cheesewright, personal interview, April 4, 2017). Tom Cheesewright, founder of the UK-based futurism consulting agency, Book of the Future, asserts, "It's two-way: Augmented reality and artificial intelligence will give advertisers greater insight into our behavior than ever before, though I believe this will be very permissions-driven." He continued, "Imagine walking into a high street store wearing future AR. You are greeted by a virtual shopping assistant who knows your entire on and offline shopping history with that brand. She knows what items are catching your eye. And an algorithm can calculate what level of discount might convince you to spend today and balance this with your historical brand loyalty."

Cheesewright believes the future of digital and traditional marketing will be highly personalized. He said Big Data and AI algorithms will provide more information about consumers than ever before, allowing marketers an enhanced understanding of consumers' desires and needs. He said that although this changing relationship may cause consumer privacy concerns initially, he is hopeful the future of social media marketing will find a balance between offering consumers convenience and trust. According to Cheesewright, "We are getting more and more conscious of the noise around the signal, which is why I believe digital ads will eventually be permissions-based. But there is a happy medium here: We are happy to get ads that are relevant, informative and entertaining. My hope is that better targeting improves return on investment, and that some of this return is re-invested in the quality of the advertising."

In terms of the future of marketing through social media, Anderson believes the concept of gamification will be heavily used in marketing strategy as consumers continue to form negative perceptions about in-your-face digital ads. However, she warned, "Trust is really important in offering value in gamification. People will sometimes throw trust out the window if they see value. They will do anything for that free Starbucks cup of coffee . . . A lot of the time, people want to get a deal, or they want to be one of the first to do something. Gamification does take advantage of those tendencies in a lot of ways" (Anderson, 2017). Still, she believes the concept of gamification will be instrumental in shaping social media marketing strategies due to its high level of user interaction and capacity to collect valuable consumer data.

V. Discussion and Recommendations for Further Research

Through exploring the insights of futurists as well as looking into Facebook's recent F8 developers' conference, this study has encouraged a nuanced understanding of how technology will affect the evolution of social media UX. When looking at insights gathered concerning how the concept of UX will evolve, three main takeaways have come to light:

- The UX paradigm has already evolved due to early advances in social media content and consumer engagement

- Successful future UX design will require the presence of two aspects: hedonism and utilitarianism; application features will only achieve positive UX and true longevity if they continue to offer users something that hasn't before existed

- The concept of UX will continue to evolve as advancing technologies give way to a new immersive digital environment

Xu asserted that UX is an ever-evolving concept. Although the UX framework is still in its infancy, the concept has already changed due to developments in technology. Furthermore, successful future UX design is predicted to be most successful if it contains a strategic balance of hedonism and utilitarianism. All interviewees agreed that user experience will continue to evolve at an increasingly rapid rate as advancing technology creates a digital environment.

Regarding the implications of the future of social media, the case study on Facebook's F8 conference and an interview with Anderson highlighted both hopeful and less hopeful possibilities:

- The future of social media will involve increased convenience and decreased privacy: augmented reality and virtual reality will create new digital hangout spaces; artificial intelligence and smart algorithms will assist in platform functions; and 360-degree video will allow users to create immersive, personalized experiences

- Challenges surrounding user privacy concerns and design issues may slow down user acceptance, affecting the continuum of technological advancement

- Consumer technologies that incorporate three features: low-friction communication, expediency of exchange, and high value proposition, will be most successful in long-term user acceptance and adaptation

Anderson stressed that evolving technology will continue to enhance the convenience and usability of different social media applications. However, these benefits will come with sizable threats – as IoT facilitates companies' accessibility to data, consumers may grow weary of corporations and the technologies they utilize. Furthermore, this loss of trust may slow user acceptance, creating a potential roadblock in the adaptation of advanced technology.

Finally, technological change will affect marketing through social media in two main ways:
- Marketers will feel increased need to balance personalization with user trust

- The concept of gamification will become instrumental in engaging consumers and heightening brand recognition

Due to foreseeable challenges with gaining and maintaining consumer trust, marketers must remain aware of consumers' attitudes before employing such technologies in marketing strategies. On the other hand, gamification may very well emerge as a strategic tool for marketers, as it has the ability to engage consumers through a novel interface. Strategies that incorporate trends, such as gamification, are likely to catch the attention of consumers, thereby heightening brand recognition.

VI. Conclusions

While the development of technology and its impact on the social media space may remain unclear to even the most knowledgeable futurists, one idea is widely agreed upon: The ways humans use and interact with social media applications will change dramatically as technologies infiltrate the space. Xu demonstrated that UX is a malleable and ever-changing construct that will evolve by social media design. In addition, while Facebook's F8 case study sheds light on the exciting developments emerging in social media, societal pushback and design limitations will likely slow the process of mass user adoption. Technologies offering low-friction communication and strong value proposition will be most successful in long-term user acceptance.

To tie these ideas together, the author used the application of marketing to demonstrate the implications of technological advancement in social media for the real world. Findings suggest the future of social media marketing involves heightened personalization and convenience, and gamification will become a useful component in reviving consumer engagement.

It's hard to predict how evolving technology will impact the ways in which consumers use social media applications. Further research should be conducted on the cognitive and behavioral effects of technological change on consumer-driven fields like social media.

The subject matter of this study included fairly predictable research limitations. The body of scholarly research regarding evolving technologies is still limited, so there was little access to background information that would provide a more sophisticated prior understanding of the topic. Similarly, the concept of UX is still fairly new and is emerging as an essential aspect of social media design. The evolution of social media will be important in solidifying the importance of this construct. However, due to the growing role of UX in the space, there is not much literature surrounding the framework as it fits into social media application design.

The future of evolving technology and its impact on social media are not widely understood due to cognitive limitations. Because of this, futurists and communications experts can only theorize how the field will evolve.

Acknowledgments

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