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## Front Matter

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research seeks to pursue truth and academic excellence in the field of communication by recognizing outstanding student scholarship that explores interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, rhetorical, and media communication. Through rigorous peer-review, the Journal strives to contribute to ongoing discussions in communication studies by publishing student papers that investigate a variety of contemporary topics and issues.

## INTRODUCTION



The Pepperdine University Communication Division is pleased to present its second volume of the student-led, peer-reviewed Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research. With the support of faculty members and university administration, this academic journal showcases the finest writings of undergraduate work exploring current discussions in communication research and inquiry. By featuring both research studies and rhetorical analyses in this edition, the journal features the breadth of communication as a field of study, observation, and analysis.

This issue could not have been successfully edited and compiled without the support of our hardworking student editors and their time and dedication. We would also like to acknowledge all students who submitted their works for consideration and continue to contribute to communication studies.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

**KEN WATERS, Ph.D.**

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**GARY SELBY, Ph.D.**

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## ABSTRACTS



### The Effect of Newer Communication Technologies on Relationship Maintenance and Satisfaction in Long-Distance Dating Relationships ..... pp. 3 – 10

Demitria Rene Doubenmier

The portrayals of minorities and interracial relationships on prime time television are often skewed and inaccurate. Minorities are drastically under represented in proportion to their actual standing in the population. Through a content analysis, researchers coded interpersonal interracial interactions in the television series, Glee. The study sought to understand the portrayal minority relationships in content geared towards teens and young adults, focusing on the quality of friendships and romantic relationships.

Researchers found that 79.2 percent of interracial relationship members were seen as equals. Of all the material coded, approximately nine hours, 48 interracial interactions occurred. Interracial relationships were portrayed as honest and unaffectionate and were very much so under represented. Future research should code both same race and interracial relationships for the ability to compare and contrast relationship quality.

### Loneliness: How Superficial Relationships, Identity Gaps, and Social Support Contribute to Feelings of Loneliness at Pepperdine University ..... pp. 11 – 18

Jessica L. Rhodes

This study aims to understand the relationship between feelings of loneliness and the amount of self- disclosure in relationships, inconsistencies in the portrayal of an individual's identity to other people, and the amount of social support felt in relationships. This study addresses feelings of loneliness reported in freshman students at Pepperdine University. Our findings suggest that deficiencies in self- disclosure negatively correlated with feelings of loneliness, as did feelings of a stronger social support system exhibit a negative correlation, but a positive impact among students in response to feelings of loneliness. Identity gaps were also found to be a prominent

factor in feelings of loneliness.

Representations of African American Political Women in *Scandal*..... pp. 19 – 24

Lydia Evans

Since its debut on April 5, 2012, ABC's *Scandal* has become one of the most popular, mainstream dramas on television. *Scandal* features one of the only, African American female lead characters on network television, Olivia Pope. This paper utilizes scholarship regarding intersectionality and stereotypical representations of African American women to analyze the character of Olivia Pope. I argue that Pope's education, confidence, and boldness help to confront the lack of complex African American female characters, but her affair with the president simultaneously reinforces negative stereotypes regarding African American women's sexuality.