

2017

Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research Volume 5 // April 2017

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(2017) "Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research Volume 5 // April 2017," *Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research*: Vol. 5, Article 22.

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Voices of

Diversity

PEPPERDINE JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH
VOLUME 5 // APRIL 2017

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, and rhetorical communication. Through rigorous peer-review, the annual *Journal* strives to contribute to ongoing discussion in communication studies by publishing student papers that investigate a variety of contemporary topics and issues.

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Introduction

Pepperdine University's Communication Division is excited to present Volume 5 of its annual student-led, peer-reviewed *Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research*. Thanks to the support of faculty members and the university administration, this year's *Journal* showcases work from across the Communication Division, including original research, case studies, journalism, reflection pieces, prose and art. In keeping with the expanded call from last year's *Journal*, we found it beneficial to accept a wide range of submissions, in order to both generate momentum for the *Journal* and feature a variety of talented students, demonstrating the breadth and depth of communication as a field of study. This year's *Journal* would have been nowhere near as successful without the diligent help of 10 associate editors, who worked on tight deadlines to review and revise submissions for both content and form.

We would also like to express grateful acknowledgement to all the students who submitted pieces to be considered for publication, as the *Journal* would cease to exist without the hard and quality work of students in the division. Thank you for demonstrating the quality of research, thinking and creativity cultivated by studies in communication at Pepperdine University. As a result of the multitude of honorable submissions, we have decided to publish an online exclusive as a part of this year's *Journal*. The online exclusive contains additional student work we find to be an exemplary complement to the work featured in the print version, so we invite all readers to visit digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/pjcr/ for both an online copy of this volume of the *Journal* and the online exclusive content.

To remain true to this year's theme of "Voices of Diversity," we have organized this year's *Journal* in terms of the different kinds of diversity represented in the pieces submitted. Each section focuses on one aspect of diversity from multiple vantage points, lending the insight and poignancy only achieved through a multi-faceted approach. The combination of reflection pieces with survey research provides a personal touch to broader statistics, highlighting the relevance of the individual experience alongside data that the *Journal* is proud to support.

From the Editor-in-Chief

I would like to let the *Journal* speak for itself this year.

With a record number of submissions, it is clear that students feel passionate about lending their voices to the conversation around diversity, and I am humbled to have had a hand in offering them a place to do just that.

Born out of consideration of both a national and campus conversation, the "Voices of Diversity" theme seemed a fitting way to address recent concerns related to the topic of diversity. I wanted the *Journal* to be representative of the various realms of diversity at play, recognizing that what makes people different is what makes them beautiful. In no way is this publication intended to be the only voice, nor do I believe it to be a comprehensive collection of examples of human diversity.

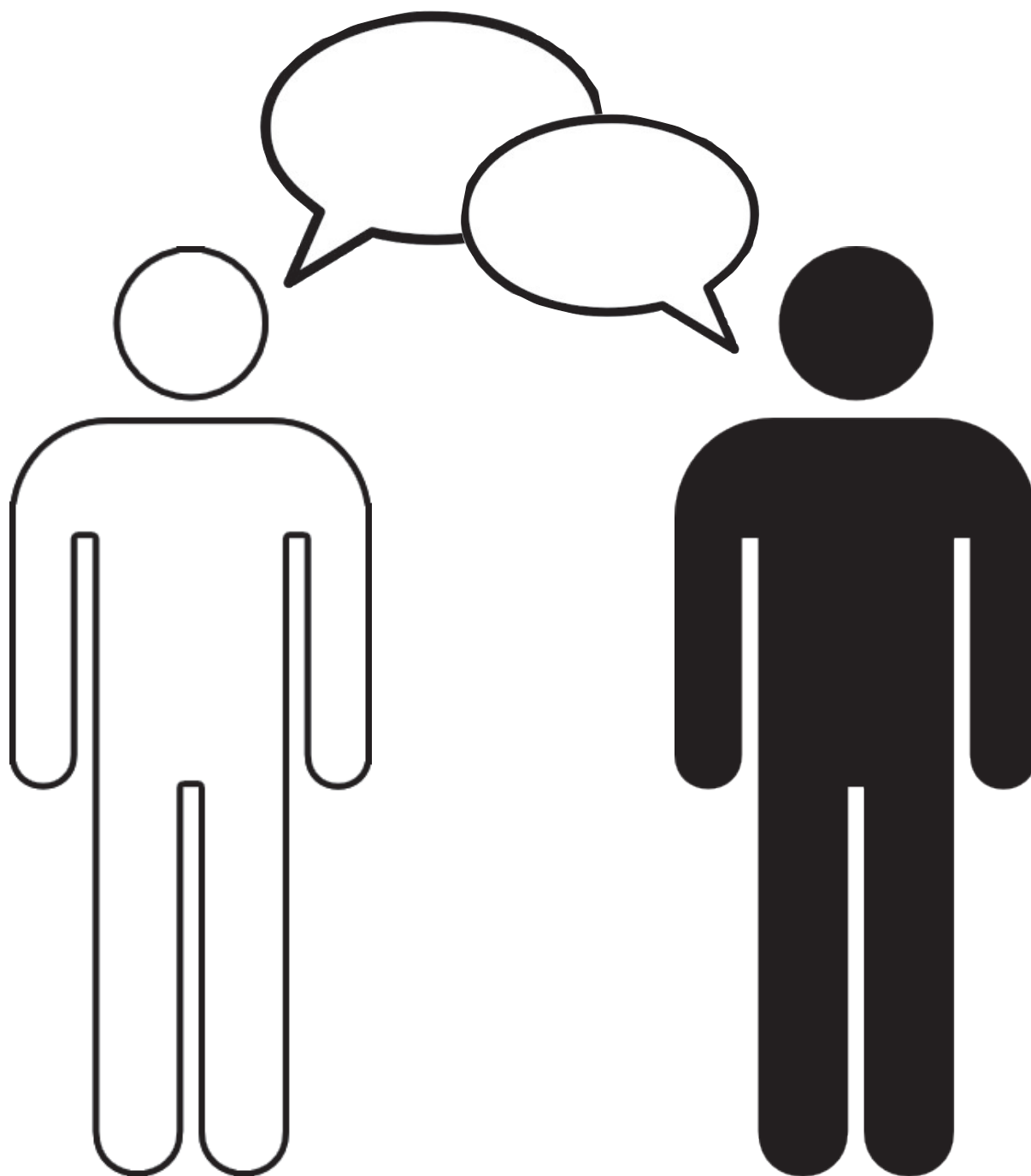
I do intend, however, for the *Journal* to spark conversation, to get people talking, and, most importantly, to get people to think. I believe that humans in productive conversation have the power to effect change in ways no other species can, and I hope that this year's *Journal* can act as a platform for those very conversations.

Thank you for reading, because that means you're a part of the conversation too. Speak. And listen. Participate in Voices of Diversity.

– Meghan Doyle, EIC

DIVERSITY IN...

Race



Into Words *A Cultural Background Assignment*

Nyah Wilson

Pepperdine University

Assigned in COM 313: Intercultural Communication (Dr. Milton Shatzer)

I reside in Carson, California. My home is located in a diverse suburb just outside of Los Angeles. My mother used to be a teacher, but now stays at home, and my father is an LA County Fire Captain. I have two older brothers. The younger of the two, Jabari, is a Junior at Eastern Washington University. The eldest, Damani just graduated from Harvard. My ethnic background is African-American. I was raised in the Lutheran Church. My parents and I are of the same religion.

That was the easy part: questions one through four. Meek inquiries; simple responses. Calm facts. But the fifth is an interrogation camouflaged in leisure. Slid into an introductory “Cultural Background Assignment.” It reads, “Have you ever personally experienced discrimination (e.g., ethnic, gender, age, nationality, social class discrimination)? If so, please describe the situation. How did this make you feel?” The sixth question asks if I’ve ever witnessed discrimination toward another person.

My fingers tremble upon my keyboard as I attempt to approach this topic...

This subject has affected my life more than I can put into words. While my peers may approach this question by simply thinking of an experience they might’ve had, and write it down, my experience with discrimination has roots far too deep for casual discussion. I am pressured with the responsibility of explaining the history of a race of people which was not adequately taught in schools. Although this is a personal cultural background assignment, this question is not solely about *me*.

Firstly, it is not possible for me to sufficiently account for all aspects of the heavy topic: discrimination/racism against Black people in America. Perhaps an ironically beautiful poem, or a heart wrenching film, or a collection of literature could explain all that must be explained. I am merely an African-American teenager emerging into adulthood, constantly in rooms full of people I feel will never wholly relate to me. I am somewhat uncomfortable with openly expressing

myself, yet passionate about voicing the pain that has been forced upon the community of people of African descent in the United States—which is ultimately unaddressed and largely undocumented. It is known that the United States has a large immigrant culture, and is very diverse. The common misconception is that everyone here is either an immigrant or a descendent of immigrants, and that those who immigrated to the United States did so in pursuit of the ‘American Dream.’ However, my ethnic group is the only group who is an exception to that rule. We did not willingly journey in pursuit of the ‘American Dream’ — we were kidnapped and forced to work as slaves so that others could, all the while being barred from the aspects of life that are said to make America great and unique. This issue has never been addressed fully by our government or our citizens. Consequently, it leads to many complex issues because we exist in a country that was not designed to incorporate us fully as rightful citizens.

The fifth question asks if I have ever personally experienced discrimination. My experience was like a child losing the stars in her eyes because the sun had kissed her skin. And her parents’ skin, and their parents’ skin and so on and so forth. It is sorrow more grave than losing your youthful innocence and blissful ignorance about the world — it is personal. My experience with discrimination surpasses the grief of having lost a loved one. It is realizing that the “freedom,” “democracy,” and “justice” that the United States preaches was never meant for me.

My experience with racism and discrimination is my everyday life. I am aware that in this world, with my identity and others like me, it is inevitable. Racism is institutionalized in America, and is factual. It is so engrained within our society that it is retained through the subconscious mind. It is in the media, television, and worldly religious culture; it is scattered throughout every aspect of life through subliminal messages and it proves a nation of hypocrisy. My “experience” is living knowing that to the world, first, I am Black, and

second, I am Nyah. It is feeling the weight of my pigment as if I am constantly lugging oversized suitcases through life's airport. It is the overwhelming majority of magazines I pick up, books I read, movies I watch, and mainstream messages I absorb telling me that European features are most beautiful. It is having been taught to hate the color of my skin, the shape of my nose, the build of my body, and the texture of my hair — all of which are God's creation. And it is the majority of the population holding those same beliefs within their subconscious, because they have been ingrained within all of us.

It is knowing that the height of the intelligence, discoveries, abilities, and greatness of Black people has been intentionally destroyed and eradicated out of my school textbooks. It is a constant belittler of who I am, who my parents are, and who my brothers are. It is a constant awareness of disadvantage in the back of my mind, ready to reveal itself at any point and time — it is anger and sadness. It is living oppressed, while your sorrow, pain, and cries of injustice are not always viewed as valid. It is seeing injustice against Emmett Till, Sandra Bland, Trayvon Martin, Renee Davis, Mike Brown, Tanisha Anderson, Eric Garner, Kendra James, Oscar Grant, Sean Bell, John Crawford, Ezell Ford, Chris Lollie, and a countless amount of other Black individuals because of the color of their skin. It is acknowledgment of the presence of such injustice being rejected by an innumerable amount of people, because of the inevitable racist roots of the nation, and lack of thorough education. It is mourning the loss of my hopeful spirit, after having met a sorrow I had not known before, while many of my friends/associates remain ignorant to enormous cries of horror, or simply do not care. It is feeling overwhelmed about writing about being Black, because I know I cannot fully elucidate what it is like in a small, introductory "Cultural Background Assignment."

In addition to dealing with racism and discrimination from the society Black people live in, it can be found in Willie Lynch's "The Making of a Slave" that the foundation of our place in the country was based on manipulation in order to also turn us against ourselves, and break apart our family structures. The United States teaches us that "White is right," and "Black is bad," intensely psychologically harming Black people. Most people do not understand that the many negative labels attached to being Black were created by White

people and falsely forced upon Black people for the economic, social, and political gains of White people.

Many also often hold the assumption that our society is "post-racial," while it is not. The differences of culture between White and Black people, as put by Lyndon B. Johnson, "are solely and simply the consequence of ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudice. They are anguishing to observe. For the Negro, they are a constant reminder of oppression. For the White, they are a constant reminder of guilt."

Because of such heavy history regarding Black people in America, in my case, "life" and "being discriminated against" are synonymous. The topic is too complex for me to give a quick story about being discriminated against, and then explain how it made me feel. The feelings never leave because racism oozes out of the creases and corners of the nation. Because the foundation of the country I live in was based on racism, implied along with my skin color is a package deal of often feeling *Black in White space*.

Until high school, the schools I attended were always ethnically and culturally diverse. Attending a predominantly White high school in Orange County put my brothers, parents and I through many tribulations, having served as a microcosm of the world — exposing the realities of the unjust and inescapable consequences for the color of our skin.

And that was the hard part: questions five and six. The remainders are meek inquiries for simple responses and calm facts: I have always had extremely diverse friends. I have a few relatives who are Filipino, and some who are white. The most vivid smells I remember from childhood are of hot turf from track meets, grass from Victoria Park — where I practiced cheerleading — my parents' cooking, cilantro, Jergen's lotion, SleepyTime Tea, "new car," new books, and my grandmother's house. I am Black ink on White pages. My background is my foreground. There is always room to spill. I will have more to write. If only the trembling could stop. ^{FC}RC


Emerge

Nyah Wilson

Pepperdine University

Independent Submission, Paint on Canvas, 11" x 15"

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.” - Marianne Williamson

This artwork is a representation of an African queen, and also of an introverted young adult. They are one. She exists in a world where her beauty is underrepresented and under-appreciated; the depth and creativeness of her thoughts often invalidated. She vibrates with Colors -- the world sees Black. She is powerful. She is vulnerable and true. 

Young Adults' Acceptance of Interracial Relationships on Television

Shannon Graves, British Beyer, Scout Easley, Arah Cho

Pepperdine University

Assigned in COM 300: Introduction to Communication Research (Dr. Theresa de los Santos)

Abstract

Interracial relationships on television are both negatively and positively represented on shows in the United States. However, few studies have been conducted to address if these representations relate to viewers attitudes and behaviors — specifically on young adult viewers. Our study conducted a survey to find if greater exposure to interracial couples through TV-shows would relate to a) greater acceptance of diversity, and b) greater acceptance of other cultures overall as well as relate to more willingness to participate in an interracial relationship, based on social cognitive theory and cultivation theory. Both hypotheses were supported, as our study found a positive 0.40 correlation between overall show exposure and acceptance of diversity as well as above 0.30 correlations for exposure of shows such as *New Girl* and *Glee* and willingness to participate in an interracial relationship. Future research should consider conducting a content analysis to have the ability to compare and contrast relationship quality, compounded with a controlled experiment to see what shows influence viewers most.

In recent years, college campuses have shown an increase in racism and discrimination with use of social media (Griggs, 2015). The University of Oklahoma expelled two students in 2014 after members of a fraternity were caught on video reciting a racist chant on a bus. Meanwhile on the West Coast, at the University of Southern California, the undergraduate student body president, who is Indian-American, was addressed with a racial slur by another student who also threw a drink at her. Evidently diversity issues are still present in the United States. Television which is included in an increasingly media penetrated world, plays an important role in providing diversity content and representations of interracial relationships for young adults (Rabor, 2014). Social cognitive theory and cultivation theory both suggest media, and specifically television, can play a role in defining attitudes and behaviors for viewers. Thus, because as the theories predict, people learn from and model what they see on TV, the purpose of this study is to assess if there is a positive response to more diverse couples on shows. Understanding the impact on young audience members is particularly important as they are growing up with different television representations and can still change their beliefs about other cultures and diversity issues. Before stating our predictions, it is necessary to review relevant bodies of literature on diversity on television, interracial relationships and the media effects theories discussed above.

Review of Literature

Diversity on Television

Diversity on television has been an issue from the time of its birth, yet it varies by race and minority group. Scholars have consistently recognized negative portrayals and underrepresentation of minority groups. According to Weigal Loomis and Soja's (1980) content analysis of race relations on prime time television, Black people constituted less than nine percent of all broadcasting, and stereotypic roles, including having lower status than whites and having less intimate relationships, predominated the screen (Weigal et al., 1980). A more recent analysis by Mastro and Stern (2003) that used a social cognitive perspective of the representations of race on U.S. prime-time television found that while conditions on TV are improving for Blacks, other groups are still suffering. According to Mastro and Stern's study, Blacks, make up the majority of racial/ethnic groups in television advertising, representing 12.3% of the total and they are shown in the most diverse and equitable manner. Latinos,

however, make up only one percent of speaking characters in commercials, although they comprise 12.5 percent of the U.S. population, and when they are shown, they tend to be overly sexualized. In commercials, Latinos were rarely seen in occupational roles and were more suggestively clad. Meanwhile, Asians were shown as less attractive and passive and Native Americans were so underrepresented they could not be analyzed in the results (Mastro & Stern, 2003).

Sexual minorities have also been stereotyped and underrepresented on television. In an analysis of prime-time network programming in 2001, Raley and Lucas (2006) found that gay and lesbian characters were represented in only 7.5 percent of all dramas and comedies. In another recent study by Fisher, Hill, and Gruber (2003), findings indicated 15 percent of programs (mostly sitcoms) contained content associated with sexual minorities. However, within these programs, many of the gay characters are stereotyped as being promiscuous, infected with HIV, or have unsatisfying relationships (Herman, 2005; Calzo & Ward, 2009). However, more recent analyses indicate that these trends are slowly changing, with some sexual minorities being represented in a more positive light. For example, in a qualitative analysis of the soap opera *All My Children*, Harrington (2003) noted the presentation of a stable lesbian character who had successful romantic relationships and continued to develop other aspects of her identity beyond her sexuality. Thus, taken together we see that on television, minorities have typically not been shown in accurate or positive ways, yet there have been gains in some areas, which may have an impact on audience members.

Interracial Relationships

As diversity appears to be improving in terms of percentages and sexual minorities on television, portrayals of interracial relationships specifically have followed a similar path. In a qualitative content analysis on the portrayal of interracial couples in children's commercials, Larson (2002) found models for behavior that included cooperative interaction between White people and ethnic minorities. The study also found that interracial friendships among children often centered around interactions of athletic play, which could be a reflection of racial diversity in real life (Larson, 2002).

However, some studies show a negative portrayal of interracial relationships on television. In a textual analysis of five television advertisements aimed at investigating the relationship between Asian American women and White men, Balaji and Warawong (2010), found that commercials highlighted the stereotypes of Asian American women as being submissive, silent, and sexually available to White males. The study also suggested that relations between Asian women and White males often portrayed the woman as deferential and posed to serve their dominant counterpart. Similarly, in a textual analysis on the representation of the Black and Asian characters and their relationships with each other in the medical dramas *ER* and *Grey's Anatomy*, Washington (2012) found that the shows portrayed relationships that lead to death or some sort of destruction in the lives of the characters. Given that previous research shows both negative and positive images of interracial relationships on TV, our study is aimed at finding whether or not these representations are impacting what young viewers believe about interracial relationships.

Theoretical Perspectives

The consequences of television shows depicting minorities and the relationships between them in negative ways as well as the benefits of television positively representing interracial relationships are explained by two theories—social cognitive theory and cultivation theory. According to both theories the cross-racial interactions viewers observe on television could predispose them to engage in similar types of behaviors in real-life. Cultivation theory explains how viewers internalize messages as a result of exposure to television and are more likely to accept portrayals as real when television is watched frequently (Potter, 2014). Bandura's social cognitive theory revolves primarily around the functions and processes of observational learning (Bandura, 1986, 2002). That is, by viewing behaviors, including those of media figures, one may develop rules to guide subsequent actions and/or be prompted to engage in previously learned behaviors. (Bandura, 1994). Thus, for people with limited contact with ethnic groups, television could become a method in which they form subsequent opinions and models

for interaction (Tan, Fujioka, & Lucht, 1997).

Past research has exemplified social cognitive and cultivation theory in terms of television viewing and subsequent attitudes, opinions, and behaviors. According to Harrington's (2003) study of the show *All My Children*, presenting a stable lesbian teenager who has successful romantic relationships, may improve viewers' attitudes toward homosexuality. Additionally, directly applying social cognitive theory, Ortiz and Harwood (2007) hypothesized that exposure to positive intergroup contact on television would be associated with more positive intergroup attitudes and found support for Black-White and gay-straight interactions. The study also found that exposure to the show *Will & Grace* significantly predicted low social distance towards homosexuals. Thus, there is evidence that TV shows provide models for positive intergroup interactions — especially for sexual minorities.

Similarly, in a field experiment examining the effects of cooperative interethnic contact on ethnic relations, Weigel, Wisler, and Cook (1975) found that equal status within interracial interactions in pursuit of common goals and equal participation with decision making groups contributed to the development of interracial friendliness, mutual respect and possible reduction of prejudices. In a similar study, Weigel et al. (1980) suggested viewers' modeling of prosocial behaviors suggests that television programs may provide these cooperative experiences and thereby yield similar for audience members when they are among racially diverse people.

While studies show positive impacts from watching relationships on television, other studies revealed more negative consequences. For example, Lee, Bichard, Irey, Walt and Carlson's (2009) study of college students in the United States, their exposure to television programming, and their stereotypical perceptions found somewhat negative associations between TV viewing and consequential attitudes. The study found students with heavy television viewing habits held many stereotypes—only attributing positive stereotypes to Caucasians, African Americans, and Latino Hispanics and associating negative stereotypes with Asians and Native Americans.

Hypotheses

These two theories illustrate the possible influence television has on young adults acceptance and beliefs about diversity. Evidently, television has a strong influence on what people view as real and normal. Past research has attempted to address diversity on TV and how interracial communication affects stereotypes, but is lacking in investigating how programs geared toward young adults in particular relate to their attitudes and willingness to participate in cross race relationships. Thus, we make the following predictions:

H1: Greater exposure to interracial couples through TV-shows will relate to a) greater acceptance of diversity and b) greater acceptance of other cultures overall for young adults.

H2: Greater exposure to interracial couples through TV-shows will relate to more willingness to participate in an interracial relationship for young adults.

Method

Participants and Procedure

79 undergraduate students who watch drama or comedy television shows at between the ages of 18 and 30 years participated in this self-report study. The online questionnaire was posted on Facebook and took approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. A survey format was used to collect our data because we wanted to examine the attitudes and perceptions of our participants, as they already existed.

Materials

For our study we used SurveyMonkey.com, an online service as our resource. There were no other materials needed.

Measures

In order to measure both our one independent and three dependent variables, we used a self-report

survey through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was made up of both original survey items and items taken from previously created scales. We selected a total of eight shows to examine, including a variety of different types of shows with different interracial relationships in these shows. We chose *Grey's Anatomy*, *Glee*, *New Girl*, *How to Get Away with Murder*, *Parenthood*, *Scandal*, *Modern Family* and *Master of None*. Each of these shows have high ratings among young adults and showcase at least one or more interracial relationship. Within the shows a variety of interracial couples are shown between Asians, Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics. For each show we asked the participant how much they watched the show as well as how much they enjoyed it. Then, for each of our measures we asked the same several questions regarding those measures for each show listed above.

Diversity of Television. Exposure to diversity of television was measured with 20 Likert-type items. The first sixteen items measured participants' awareness of the television shows we chose (1 = *never*, 6 = *always*) and if they liked them using questions such as, "How much do you watch *Grey's Anatomy*?" or "How much do you enjoy *Grey's Anatomy*?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *N/A*). For the next four items (1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*) there were instructions at the top of the page that asked participants to think about the shows in the questionnaire that they have seen and to answer the questions with them in mind. The last four items measured participants acceptance of diversity in the television shows using questions such as, "How much do you think mixing in relationships is okay?" or "Did you like the relationships portrayed in these shows?"

Acceptance of Diversity. Perceptions regarding acceptance of diversity were assessed with 10 Likert-type scale items (1 = *strongly disagree*, 4 = *strongly agree*). For our study, we took questions such as "I feel more secure when I am in the presence of members of my ethnic group" from the Multicultural Sensitivity Scale (2000). These questions indicate levels of acceptance felt by the majority when exposed to culturally different influences and environments. We also took questions such as "I do not participate in jokes that are derogatory to any individual group" from the Cultural Diversity Self-Assessment.

Willingness to Participate. The participants' willingness to participate in interracial relations as measured with a seven Likert-type items (1 = *strongly agree*, 6 = *strongly disagree*). For the measurements, we formulated original questions such as "I relate to many of the diverse relationships shown on television." We also included questions from an Attitude Toward Interracial Dating Scale (2004) such as "I can imagine myself in a long-term relationship with someone of another race." These questions indicated the participants' willingness to pursue or engage in a cultural or interracial relationship as a result of watching television shows that highlight these type of relationships. The scale measures interactional engagement, respect for cultural differences, interactional confidence, and television cultivation based on young adults.

Cultural Acceptance. Attitudes regarding cultures and cultural acceptance were measured with ten Likert type items (1 = *strongly disagree*, 4 = *strongly agree*). For our study, we took questions from the Intercultural Development Inventory (2003) such as "Our culture's way of life should be a model for the rest of the world." which indicated the level of cultural acceptance young adult participants feel. We also took questions from Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (2002) which measured interaction confidence, interaction engagement, and respect for cultural differences. These questions included ones such as "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures."

Demographic Information. Gender, age and school year were also assessed.

Results

For our each of our Hypotheses, H1: Greater exposure to interracial couples through TV-shows will relate to a) greater acceptance of diversity, and b) greater acceptance of other cultures overall for young adults and H2: Greater exposure to interracial couples through TV-shows will relate to more willingness to participate in an interracial relationship for young adults, we ran correlated averages on Excel.

We averaged each of the participant's responses to the questions of how much they watched each show and how much they enjoyed each show. To answer H1 we correlated the mean of the overall exposure question: "How much did you enjoy the relationships displayed in these shows?" ($r = 0.40$) to our acceptance of diversity

scale. Next, we correlated the average of how much each show was watched and enjoyed to the averages of the acceptance of diversity scale (see Appendix for tables). We also correlated how much the show was watched and show enjoyment to the overall cultural acceptance scale question averages (see Appendix for table). For H2, we correlated show watching averages to our willingness to participate scale, as well as show enjoyment.

The show with the strongest correlation between both show watching ($r = 0.36$) and enjoyment ($r = 0.39$) to willingness to participate was *New Girl*, supporting H2. *Modern Family* was another show with stronger watch ($r = 0.35$) and enjoyment ($r = 0.37$) to willingness to participate correlations. Overall, except *Parenthood* and *Scandal*, every show showed a positive correlation (above $r = 0.20$) between show watching and enjoyment to willingness to participate which also supports H2.

H1 was both supported and not supported, varying by show watching and enjoyment and by acceptance of both diversity and culture. While not every television show had correlations between both acceptance of diversity and culture, they each had at least a weak positive correlation of $r = 0.10$ or above for one of the two. Generally, comedies showed the strongest correlations, as *Glee* had the strongest correlation for acceptance of diversity and watching ($r = 0.24$), and *New Girl* had the strongest correlation with enjoyment and cultural acceptance ($r = 0.18$). Conversely, dramas showed weaker correlations, as *Scandal* and *Grey's Anatomy* showed little to no correlation between watching and enjoyment to cultural and diversity acceptance. Though support for H1 was only somewhat supported for the specific shows taken individually, the correlation between overall relationship of show exposure to acceptance of diversity ($r = 0.40$) did support H1, as it suggests as viewers were exposed to interracial relationships on television, their acceptance of diversity increased.

Discussion

Implications

Generally, H2 was more supported than H1, and we were leading us to ask: why did cultural acceptance and diversity not show as strong of correlations as willingness to participate? Our acceptance of diversity and cultural acceptance scales were quite similar, therefore having both variables with similar scales could have diluted our results. However, our results showed stronger correlations between show enjoyment than that of show watching, implying that the shows participants enjoyed were the more influential in affecting behaviors and attitudes. Overall, because both hypotheses were supported, our study showed support for both social cognitive theory and cultivation theory. Social cognitive theory was the most supported, as our willingness to participate scale showed a relationship for viewers modeling what they saw on television in the real world. Cultivation theory was also semi-supported, as our results showed a relationship between what viewers watched and what they believe about the world.

Our study's strongest correlation was between enjoyment of the show *New Girl* and willingness to participate in interracial relationships ($r = 0.39$), leading us to ask: what it is about the show specifically that led to generally stronger correlations? As other comedies showed stronger correlations as well, these shows could be more popular among young audiences or could be showing more light hearted relationships and therefore are linked with positive attitudes and behaviors. Conversely, dramas such as *Scandal*, which revealed weaker correlations could be less popular among young adults or less popular because of the more dramatic behaviors exhibited by the characters in interracial relationships.

Limitations and Future Research

Because we used a survey for our method and did not test third variables, a weakness of our research is our inability to make any causal claims from our results. Moreover, our convenient sample, limits our ability generalize to a broader population. Our survey's sample was predominately Asian (43%), which could have skewed which shows showed stronger correlations and which did not. *Scandal* and *Parenthood* for example do not depict any interracial relationships with Asian characters and both showed a weaker relationship between show watching and acceptance of diversity. A third variable affecting our study is that most of our sample was taken from

Pepperdine University, which in recent years has been experiencing racial tensions, possibly causing students to be hyper-aware of race relationships and cultural diversity. Another weakness of our study, was not knowing the specifics of show content. A content analysis revealing comparatively the best examples of interracial relationships on television and the behaviors of such relationships would have strengthened our results and implications. However, one strength of our study is the subject itself: how race on television is influencing behaviors, especially among young adults who are increasingly growing up in media-enriched worlds, and that has not been widely studied.

Because of the limitations of this study, future research should include a much larger representative and more diverse sample size to allow for generalizable findings. Researchers should also consider using a different method or combining several methods of research to ensure a more comprehensive study. Conducting a content analysis to code for what qualities of particular interracial relationships as well as the frequency of when they are shown would be helpful in figuring out the most recent content and best examples to examine the connection between participants watching habits and behaviors. Compounded with a content analysis, a controlled experiment would also be effective in making causal claims, as comparing reactions to diverse shows to non-diverse shows in a controlled setting would show true differences between the shows that are influential in changing attitudes and behaviors.

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Appendix A

<i>Grey's Anatomy Watch</i>		<i>Parenthood Watch</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.01	H1a: Shows and Diversity	-0.04
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.1	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.1
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.21	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.14
<i>Grey's Anatomy Enjoy</i>		<i>Parenthood Enjoy</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.05	H1a: Shows and Diversity	-0.01
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.12	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.03
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.34	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.18
<i>How to Get Away With Murder Watch</i>		<i>Scandal Watch</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.12	H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.01
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.12	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.02
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.27	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.16
<i>How to Get Away With Murder Enjoy</i>		<i>Scandal Enjoy</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.14	H1a: Shows and Diversity	-0.01
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.13	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.03
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.29	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.19
<i>Glee Watch</i>		<i>New Girl Watch</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.24	H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.01
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.05	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.15
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.31	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.36
<i>Glee Enjoy</i>		<i>New Girl Enjoy</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.2	H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.07
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	-0.02	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.18
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.23	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.39

<i>Modern Family Watch</i>		<i>Master of None Watch</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.1	H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.12
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.13	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.03
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.35	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.21
<i>Modern Family Enjoy</i>		<i>Master of None Enjoy</i>	
H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.09	H1a: Shows and Diversity	0.11
H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0.1	H1b: Shows and Cultural Acceptance	0
H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.37	H2: Shows and Willingness to Participate	0.21

Appendix B

This study is about relationships on television. You will be asked questions about your television watching habits, as well as your beliefs on relationships. Some of the questions may involve personal topics, such as your cultural beliefs. Your responses are completely anonymous. Your name is not being collected so your responses cannot be connected to you in any way. This study is also completely voluntary. You may skip any question you do not feel comfortable answering or you may decide to stop participating at any point during the study. If you consent to participate in this study, please begin the survey now.

A. I am 18 years of age or older and I agree to participate in this study.

B. I do not wish to participate.

How much do you watch *Grey's Anatomy*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *Grey's Anatomy*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

How much do you watch *How to Get Away with Murder*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *How to Get Away with Murder*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

Do you watch or did you watch *Glee*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *Glee*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

How much do you watch *Scandal*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *Scandal*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

How much do you watch *Modern Family*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *Modern Family*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

How much do you watch *Parenthood*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *Parenthood*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

How much do you watch *New Girl*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *New Girl*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

How much do you watch *Master of None*?

- 1 Never
- 2 Very Rarely
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Occasionally
- 5 Very Frequently
- 6 Always

How much do you enjoy *Master of None*?

- 1 Not At All
- 2 Slightly
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Quite A Bit
- 5 Very Much
- 6 Extremely
- 7 N/A

Now you will answer questions about the shows you have seen.

Overall out of all the shows you watch...

I think mixed race *friendships* between the characters is okay.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I think mixed race *romantic relationships* between the characters is okay.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I like the different races represented in these shows.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I like the relationships portrayed in these shows.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

After watching these television shows, I have a different perception of my friends of different races.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

After watching these television shows, I am more inclined to befriend people from other races.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I would be willing to participate in an interracial relationship.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I wish to engage in an interracial relationships, after watching these television shows.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I relate to many of the diverse relationships shown on television.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

Interracial dating interferes with my fundamental beliefs.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I believe that interracial couples date outside their race to get attention.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

Culturally mixed marriage are wrong.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I can imagine myself in a long-term relationship with someone of another race.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I exclusively pursue after interracial relationships.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I feel more secure when I am in the presence of members of my ethnic group.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I feel comfortable when I socialize with persons outside my ethnic group.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I am attracted to people of different ethnic backgrounds as me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I enjoy associating with persons of other ethnic groups.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I have multiple friends from a variety of ethnicities.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I actively seek opportunities to connect with people of different ethnic backgrounds as me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I respect the beliefs of people ethnically different than me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I work to make sure people who are ethnically different feel accepted.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I do not participate in jokes that are derogatory to any race.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I speak up if I witness someone being racially discriminated against.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

People should avoid individuals from other cultures who behave differently.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

Our culture's way of life should be a model for the rest of the world.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

When I come in contact with people from a different culture, I find I change my behavior.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I respect the values of people from different cultures.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I avoid situations where I have to deal with people of different cultures than my own.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

I enjoy experiencing differences between someone of a different culture and myself.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly Disagree
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

Please specify your gender.

- A. Male B. Female

Please fill your age.

What is your ethnicity?

- A. Black E. Native American
 B. White F. Pacific Islander
 C. Asian G. Other
 D. Latino

Please choose your academic year.

- A. Freshman C. Junior
 B. Sophomore D. Senior

DIVERSITY IN...

Sexual Orientation



Changing Media and Changing Minds: Media Exposure and Viewer Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

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Assigned in COM 300: Introduction to Communication Research (Dr. Theresa de los Santos)

Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the relationships between media exposure, age, and attitude on homosexuality. Considering past research, we concluded that younger participants with higher levels of media would have more positive attitudes on homosexuality. A convenience non-probability sample of 198 participants (100 young adults, 49 middle-aged adults, and 49 older adults) participated in a cross-sectional, quantitative online survey. Our results show that (1) higher media exposure levels foster more accepting attitudes, (2) young participants are more accepting of homosexuality, and (3) news media participants have more accepting attitudes compared to entertainment media participants.

Keywords: media exposure, homosexuality, age, attitudes, acceptability, willingness

The main premise of media is storytelling. Good storytelling seeks to represent all different kinds of people and situations that make up the human experience of life. With homosexuality an increasingly common sexual preference across cultures, it is important for the media to produce content including fair representations of life as a homosexual person. Although they make up only a small sample of the population, their presence should not go unrecognized in the media. In July 2014, The National Health Interview Survey reported that only 2.3 percent of Americans identify as homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual. However, in relation to that small percentage of the population, their presence in the media has grown significantly. On all broadcast networks, cable television and streaming services, the presence of regular characters identifying as LGBTQ increased anywhere from 2 to 7 percent since last year (GLAAD). In film, about 16 percent of films released in 2014 featured at least one homosexual character (Life Site News). Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine how the introduction of content portraying and describing homosexual people and issues into the mainstream media relates to audiences' views and acceptance. In previous research, media exposure has in fact shown significance in determining attitudes about content. In terms of homosexuality representations in the media, previous research suggests that positive exposure boosts positive attitudes for both news and entertainment media.

Review of Literature

General Media Influence

The mainstream media has an important role as an information provider and social model. As a primary source of information, the media has a strong influence over individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, especially for those who don't have wide access to other information or are just beginning to shape and form their identities and opinions. Through a self-report survey study, Rimal, Chung, and Dhungana (2015) found that social context moderates how media effects are received by the audiences. The researchers acknowledge that the knowledge present in a larger community contributes to how people consume media and how much they are influenced by it with more knowledgeable communities turning to each other more often than to the media than less knowledgeable communities and communal attitudes about certain issues often causing individual attitudes. (Rimal, Chung, & Dhungana, 2015). Television specifically is one of the main sources of media influencing both

young and old audiences today. Gehrau, Brüggemann, and Handrup (2016), in their study of television viewing, discuss the power of the media in influencing and inspiring audiences for their futures, particularly in young adults and children and their future careers. In their findings, Gehrau, Brüggemann, and Handrup explain how the media can provide a reinforcement effect in which people's interests motivate what they are interested in watching on television or viewing in the media, like a predisposition. Should a television viewer have an interest in the lives of LGBTQ couples, that interest would provoke them to watch LGBTQ related content, then reinforcing the initial interest they had. In this case, we understand that the media are not all powerful but can influence those predispositions. As in the previous example, the research on general media influence can apply to other situations regarding the concentration of homosexuality in the media, concerning how far it has come in representing that community today.

Media Representations of Homosexuality

Minority groups, including homosexuals, have historically been underrepresented and stereotyped in television shows and films. Traditionally, homosexual characters have been shown in stereotypical, negative roles solely for the audience's humor (Life Site News). These stereotypes include characters lacking stable relationships, being preoccupied with their sexuality, and being laughable, one-dimensional figures. However, throughout years of growth of the media as a platform of social expression, there is notable progression in representations and attention to homosexuality.

We have specifically seen more supportive representation of homosexuality in media beginning in the 21st century. In recent years, the number of shows with leading or recurring homosexual characters has varied from 16 in the 1997-1998 season to 29 in the 2000-2001 season (Homosexual and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, n.d.). When studying homosexual television content from 2001-2003, Fisher, et. al. (2007) found that sexual content associated with homosexual individuals was found in about 15% of programs overall.

Not only has the frequency of homosexual characters increased, but accurate representations of them and more realistic storytelling has as well. HBO's series, *Looking*, received substantial praise from the homosexual community, with *Rolling Stone* crediting it to having, "accomplished something distinctive in its ability to show the range of male intimacy," despite its early cancellation and abrupt ending. In addition, when studying the portrayal of children with homosexual parents in the media, Landau (2009) discovered that many empowering messages and lessons that come from such relationships are unfortunately repressed when compared to the narratives of the negative aspects of their world. However, Entertainment media content has overall shifted in significant ways throughout the years to be more representative of the homosexual community.

News outlets have also shifted coverage as more homosexual-rights issues have come about in recent years. During the homosexual liberation movement of the 1960s, the only media coverage being made was mainly to reinforce the present anti-homosexual stereotypes (Bennett, 1998). *The New York Times* ran an article referring to them primarily as "deviant" and "promiscuous," in their first ever front-page story about homosexuals. It wasn't until the homosexual rights movement and AIDS epidemic of the 1980s that changes were being implemented into mainstream American media. (Alwood, 1996). Regarding news media, Landau (2009) concluded that the presence of homosexuals in the mainstream news flow is important because it is used as a reference point for constructing homosexual politics for American life as it is continually changing. As media representation of the LGBTQ community expands, there is greater potential for messages to influence audience member's beliefs and attitudes about the homosexual community in positive ways.

Media's Impact on Attitudes about Homosexuality

In previous research, the media has been shown to influence audience members' attitudes and beliefs about homosexuality. Bond & Compton (2015) were able to analyze support for the homosexual community by heterosexuals by measuring the degree to which they viewed homosexual characters on television, also ruling out any possibly influential variables such as sex, age, race, religiosity, and interpersonal relationships with homosexual individuals. The results showed that even in the absence of any personal relationships with openly

homosexual acquaintances, heterosexual television viewers will endorse homosexuals simply through their media interactions with them (Bond & Compton, 2015). Indeed, as acceptance of homosexuality in the media has risen over time, so have viewer attitudes toward it. In Calzo and Ward's (2009) study of attitudes toward homosexuality across the media, they found that most influence came not from one platform, but many. With college students, media diets varied across platforms for what they considered to be an influential media source for them. Different genres held various homosexuality acceptability rates with music videos producing the most positive attitudes, as one example. With this, Calzo and Ward (2009) concluded that, "Attitudes towards homosexuality are not inborn, but are socialized" (p. 280). The degree to which this socialization takes place is the result of both media and our predisposed variables, best described in behavioral communication theories.

Theoretical Perspectives

Some prominent media theories like cultivation theory, framing and agenda-setting help better explain how audiences' attitudes about homosexuality may be shifted by media exposure.

Cultivation. Cultivation Theory examines the effects of one's long-term, prolonged exposure with television. From a cultivation perspective, some research has suggested that the continued innovation of modern media has caused traditional theory of media cultivation to be less relevant, primarily for ethnic minorities who are seeing much more prominent representation on television (Morgan, Shanahan & Signorielli, 2015). But for the realm of homosexual representations, the portrayals of positive or negative examples of homosexuality on television will influence the beliefs among heavy viewers that homosexuality is either abnormal, rare, and problematic or normal, frequent and accepted based on the content. For example, if a viewer were a frequent, intent watcher of multiple seasons' of the talk show, *Ellen*, hosted by the well-known lesbian actress and comedian of the same name, they would most likely view the happenings of her personal life as revealed on the show and her interactions with other members of the entertainment community in her interviews as absolutely normal, frequent and accepted, in turn influencing their ideas about the entire homosexual and lesbian community in the same way due to their prolonged exposure with the positive representations.

Framing. Framing theory states that the media focuses on certain topics and delivers information on them in a motive conscious way. The media is said to highlight specific events and place them in a certain context to either encourage or discourage interpretations. Because of this, the media produces a particularly selective influence in the way people view reality as they see it in media. Thus, the way stories about homosexual issues are framed also plays a large role in what ends up being viewed, in turn affecting the attitudes of the viewers to come out of it. For example, the attitudes emerging from the news of homosexual marriage becoming legal would be significantly altered if news stories include condescending and negative language or bias (CNN).

Agenda-Setting Theory. Agenda setting theory explains the ability of the news media to influence the importance of topics on the public agenda. For example, when marriage equality was examined in a 2013 cover of the *New York Times*, the issue was perceived by readers as important and notable to a greater degree than before the publication of that news article (Rodriguez & Blumell, 2014). So, the more the topic of homosexuality is covered in news media, the more an audience will regard it as prominent, news worthy and applicable to others' lives as well as their own.

Genre Differences

Although many platforms of media produce content surrounding homosexual people and issues, not all are not covered equally across these platforms. The difference between news and entertainment media is especially notable in our research. Of the fourteen genres examined by Fisher, et al. (2007), only movies and variety/comedy shows had substantial percentages of programs that contained homosexual content. Still, overall, entertainment media represents homosexuals in a more integrated way in relation to the rest of society by putting them in positive situations on screen that depict integration, acceptance and love of other characters interacting with them (Bond & Compton, 2015). Whereas in news media, content is restricted to unbiased, factual events that are often conflict-driven and rarely showcase a homosexual individual's day to day lifestyle (Gibson, 2003).

In a content analysis of four daily newspapers, Murphy and Aarons (2001) found that the themes of conflict was central in over half, around 64 percent, of the stories about homosexuals. Those not about conflict were found to be reporting only mainly about entertainment aspects such as television, movies, books or plays with little relation besides the mention of homosexual characters (Gibson, 2003).

Viewer Variables

There are also pre-existing variables within viewers that should be considered regarding media's effects on attitudes about homosexuality, including age, religion, and gender. When it comes to age, younger people should be more open to the media's representation of homosexuality. Sharpe (2002) found that, "the portrayal of homosexual people in areas of the media, as characters portrayed in soap operas, helps to make young people's views on homosexuality more acceptable. It represents another way of 'knowing' someone vicariously" (pp. 270-271). Religious influences have also been shown to play a prominent role in one's acceptance of the practice of homosexuality. For example, because Evangelical Christianity is more judgmental of same-sex relations, individuals under that denomination are less likely to be as strongly influenced by media exposure to homosexuality portrayals than others under a religious practice with less or no critical beliefs about same-sex relations (Schnabel, 2016). Because we are more likely to understand and get along with this similar to us, gender is another variable to examine upon attitudes toward homosexuality. Whitley (2002) examined the degree of masculinity or femininity on attitudes toward homosexuality, finding that more masculine-reporting males and more feminine-reporting females, or, more traditionally gender-belief oriented individuals, had more negative attitudes. So, aside from the influencing power of media exposure alone, the notable viewer variables that influence attitudes on content, a part from, or in conjunction with media exposure, are important to acknowledge.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

In summary, the media has a large influence on how individuals are exposed to social issues. As the representation of homosexual characters in both actual, news-based and non-factual, entertaining media increases, there is potential for more acceptance in the public opinion of homosexuality. This study seeks to expand this knowledge regarding media exposure and the acceptance of homosexuality by examining the variables of media exposure, viewer age, and the type of media platform. Based on the above mentioned literature, we proposed the following hypotheses and research question.

H1: As exposure to media with more positive representations of homosexual people and the issue of homosexuality increase a) acceptability for the issue, and b) willingness to learn more about the issue will improve.

H2: Overall, younger adults (who have likely had more exposures to more positive media representations of homosexuality) will be more accepting of the issue.

RQ1: Does satisfaction or close attention to factual, news-based or non-factual, entertaining media representations of homosexuality relate to acceptability and more willingness to learn about the issue?

Method

Participants and Procedure

A convenience/purposive sample of 198 participants (154 females and 44 males) between the ages of 18 and 79 ($M=36.43$, $SD = 18.61$) participated in a cross-sectional survey study that assessed media exposure and attitudes about homosexual rights and homosexuality. A variety of ages were purposefully represented in the sample with 50.51% (100 people) of participants between the ages of 18 and 23 years old (young adults), 24.75% (49 people) of participants between the ages of 28 and 52 years old (middle-aged adults), and 24.75% (49 people) of participants between 53 and 79 years old. In terms of religious affiliation, 17.26% of participants identified themselves as Protestant, 20.31% of participants identified themselves as Catholics, 59.39% identified themselves

as Christian, 0.51% identified as Islam, 0.51% identified as Hindu, 1.52% identified as Buddhist, 5.08% identified as other, and 10.15% identified as no religion. Note that these percentages together total over 100% because some participants selected more than one religion, majority of these individuals stating that they were Catholic and Christian, Protestant and Christian, etc.

The online questionnaire was distributed via the social networking site, Facebook, through individual messages and group postings within the Pepperdine community and an email link.

Materials

The electronic survey service, SurveyMonkey.com, was used to create and administer the questionnaire. There were no other materials needed for the study; it was a low cost and paperless questionnaire.

Measures

The questionnaire used in this study was made up of 35 items in total. The first question was used to gain the participants' informed consent.

General Media Exposure. Overall media exposure was assessed with self-report measures. First, Likert-type items were used to assess participants' overall media use. For the question: "On average, how much time do you spend on the following media everyday?", participants were asked to respond on a scale from (1 = Never, 5 = More than 5 hours) for five different media forms including television, magazines, newspapers, internet and social media. Participants were also asked: "How often do you engage with entertainment media platforms (including non-factual television programs and films)?", and "How often do you engage with news media platforms (including factual news broadcast, online articles, or newspapers)?" Subjects responded on a scale from (1 = Never, 5 = Always). In the study, participants are asked about their exposure to two types of media: entertainment media, and news media.

Entertainment Media Exposure. For the purpose of this study, entertainment media was defined as any media created solely for the purpose of entertaining the public and spreading popular culture. To measure exposure to entertainment media with a focus on homosexual issues or prominent homosexual characters, participants were first asked if they had seen 16 movies and television shows including *Orange is the New Black*, *Modern Family*, *Glee*, *The L Word*, *The Kids are Alright*, and *Brokeback Mountain*. Next, participants were asked to rate on a Likert scale from (1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied) how satisfied they were with the TV programs or movies they had seen on the list.

News Media Exposure. For the purpose of this study, news media was defined as any media created in order to spread current events and keep the public updated around the world. Following the same set-up for entertainment media described above, participants were first asked if they were exposed at all to ten news events about homosexual and LGBT issues including Bruce Jenner announcing that she is now Caitlyn and will live as a woman, President Barack Obama announcing the designation of the first national monument to the LGBTQ community, and Tammy Baldwin becoming the first homosexual politician elected to the Senate, and more. Participants were then asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Never, 5 = A Lot) how much they followed each news event.

Attitudes about Homosexuality. Attitudes about homosexuality were measured using a 22-item, 5-point Likert-type scale to assess participants' perceptions about the inappropriate or appropriate behaviors of homosexuals (1 = Agree, 5 = Disagree) These items were divided into categories of overall attitudes of acceptability and willingness to learn more. A total of 10 questions assessed attitudes of acceptability, including statements such as, "I find homosexual acts disgusting." A total of 12 items assessed attitudes of willingness with items such as, "I would not mind having a homosexual friend." To measure both acceptability and willingness, subjects responded on a scale (1 = Agree, 5 = Disagree).

Demographics. Participants were also asked to report their gender, age, and religious affiliation.

Results

H1: The first hypothesis predicted that people with more exposure to media with more positive representations of homosexual people and the issue of homosexuality will have higher acceptability for the issue and willingness to learn more about the issue. Our independent variable (amount of media exposure) was categorical (low/high), and our dependent variable (attitudes toward homosexuality) was continuous. Attitudes toward homosexuality was measured on a 5-point Likert-type item (1 = Disagree, 5 = Agree). To see if the hypothesis is supported, we compared each group's mean homosexuality attitude value in terms of acceptability and willingness. In summary of our results, individuals with an overall higher media exposure were more accepting and more willing to learn about homosexuality.

H1a: Based on data in our sample for entertainment media consumers, the homosexuality acceptability mean among low-exposed individuals was 1.55 and the homosexuality attitude mean among high-exposed was 1.31. This evidence supports our hypothesis since 1.31 is lower than 1.55. In the same group of entertainment media consumers, the homosexuality willingness mean among low-exposed individuals was 1.89 and the homosexuality attitude mean among high-exposed was 1.31. In addition, this evidence was supported our hypothesis since 1.31 is lower than 1.89. This evidence is shown below in Figure 1.

H1b: Based on data in our sample for news media consumers, shown below in Figure 2, the homosexuality acceptability mean among low-exposed individuals was 1.65 and the homosexuality attitude mean among high-exposed was 1.48. Thus, this evidence supported our hypothesis since 1.48 is lower than 1.65. In the same group of news media consumers, the homosexuality acceptability mean among low-exposed individuals was 2.03 and the homosexuality attitude mean among high-exposed was 1.81. This evidence supported our hypothesis since 1.81 is lower than 2.03.

H2: The second hypothesis predicted that younger adults who have likely had more exposure to more positive media representations of homosexuality will be more accepting of issues relating to homosexuality. Our IV (degree of acceptability) was interval, and our DV (age) was categorical, as seen in Figure 3 above. The degree of acceptability was measured using a 5-point Likert-type item (1 = Disagree, 5 = Agree) where 1 disagree represented a low level of acceptance and 5 represented a high level of acceptance towards homosexual issues, and to measure age, three categories were used: young adults (ages 18-23, n=100), middle-aged adults (ages 28-52, n=49), and older adults (ages 53-79, n=48). To see if the hypothesis is supported, we compared each group's mean degree of acceptability. Based on data in our sample, the degree of acceptability mean among young adults was 1.46, among middle-aged adults was 1.85, and among older adults was 2.07. Thus, this hypothesis was supported since 1.46 is lower than 1.85 is lower than 2.07.

RQ1a: The research question inquired about the degree of acceptability and willingness to learn more about the issue based on satisfaction or close attention paid to news or entertainment media representations of homosexuality. The variable of satisfaction was measured on a categorical level using a Likert-type item (1 = Very dissatisfied, 5 = Very satisfied) where 1-very dissatisfied represented a low level of satisfaction and 5-very satisfied represented a high level of satisfaction. The degree of acceptability was measured using a 5-point Likert-type item (1 = Disagree, 5 = Agree) where 1-Disagree represented a low level of acceptance and 5-Agree represented a high level of acceptance towards homosexual issues. A correlation between these variables was computed. Based on the data in our sample, the correlation between satisfaction of entertainment media and acceptability of the issue was $r = -0.39$ and willingness of the issue was $r = -0.33$. Thus, the evidence supports that satisfaction of entertainment media representations of homosexuality negatively correlates for a lower willingness to learn about the issue and negatively correlates for a lower acceptability of the issue.

RQ1b: In addition, The variable of following news coverage was measured on a categorical level using a Likert-type item (1 = Never, 5 = A lot) where 1-never represented a low level of following coverage and 5-a lot represented a high level of following coverage. The degree of acceptability was measured using a 5-point Likert-type item (1 = Disagree, 5 = Agree) where 1-disagree represented a low level of acceptance and 5 represented a high level of acceptance towards homosexual issues. In addition, the correlation between following news media and acceptability of the issue was $r = -0.21$ and willingness of the issue was $r = 0.86$. Thus, the evidence supports that close attention to factual news based media representations of homosexuality correlates with a greater willingness to learn about the issue but correlates negatively with an acceptability of the issue.

Discussion

The findings of this study support the claim that media is a significant influence on attitudes about many different aspects of life but primarily the practice of homosexuality as we analyzed. As homosexuality has become a growing commonality, the representations of their community in the media also became increasingly important, catalyzing a need for research on its effects.

Our findings in Hypothesis 1a and b regarding attitudes in response to entertainment and news media exposure correlate with findings from Bond and Compton (2015) and Armstrong (2014), who said that a greater exposure to positive homosexual media will lead to more positive attitudes towards the subject among audience members. The truth in this finding stems from the amount of increased positivity presented in the media in recent years, as observed by Portwood (2016). In both cases overall, more media exposure in general lead to more positive attitudes in the breakdown of both the acceptability and willingness scales.

By getting a solid sample size of three different age categories, the survey accounted for the demographics and opinions of a variety of people accurately representative of those who engage in the entertainment shows and news story examples provided in the questions. The findings correlate with those of Anderson and Fetner (2008) who claimed that once opinions are formed in early adulthood, they are not likely to change. However, due to the recent increase in homosexual media as observed by Portwood (2016), the opinions of younger generations have been formed to be more accepting of homosexual media. Media outlets or future researchers could take this information and use it to target a specific age group should they want to appeal to or study attitudes toward homosexuality knowing where they stand now based on age alone.

When comparing entertainment to news media in their portrayal of homosexual topics on the attitudes of viewers, results pointed to news media as provoking a much greater willingness to learn than entertainment media while entertainment media produced slightly more acceptability among participants. However, the review of literature focused primarily on the idea that entertainment media would provoke greater acceptance and willingness because of the life-like portrayals of homosexuals and their incorporation into society with heterosexuals and not news media because of the harsh history of news publication toward homosexuals and the concrete, conflict based nature of news stories. The literature review pointed to the research done by Gehrau, Bruggemann and Handrup (2016) which found that entertainment media portraying the homosexual community as entertaining and humorous would drive viewers to be more involved with and engrossed in them and their situation. This was connected with the Gibson (2003) study that concluded the news media's failure to portray homosexuals functioning as real people in anything other than conflict or health related stories. In contrast, results showed that news-minded individuals were instead more information seeking and therefore willing to learn more about the issues presented than those entertainment-minded who were intaking media solely for a pleasurable experience. However, because acceptability on the news media attitude scale was not nearly as high as willingness and individuals who report frequently following news would be considered informatively inclined despite the topic of the story, conclusions cannot be drawn to assume that a high willingness but low acceptability would lead to positive attitudes about homosexuality. Therefore it seems that the entertainment media content was the most contributive to producing positive attitudes about homosexuality through the more consistent positive correlation on the acceptability and willingness scale.

There are limitations to this study that suggest additional analyses are warranted. To make the study stronger, in-depth interviews could have been conducted, reflecting more of a qualitative approach in order to get a deeper understanding as to why participants responded to the survey questions the way they did and to avoid any wording confusion some questions may have caused. In addition, a different approach could have been taken to the survey in terms of scale set-up, producing instead a 4-point Likert-type scale to force participants to polarize their answers to avoid any comfortability in selecting neutral answers like some of the results showed. A change in the choice of entertainment media television shows and news media story examples we presented on the survey could have slightly altered results or allowed more individuals to be categorized as receiving high media exposure, although the choices did cover a solid variety that helped lead to the current findings. Changing the demographic lens used is another possibility, offering a question on the survey regarding sexual orientation of participants which would have been used as another tool to analyze viewer variables, comparing results of those who identified as LGBTQ and heterosexual.

Moving forward with application, this study incorporated plenty of previous research to support the findings while generating enough new results to be applied to future research. Conducting research and drawing new conclusions are not only important now but will continue to grow in significance as homosexuality and other forms of diversity grow in American mainstream media and create a demand to do so.

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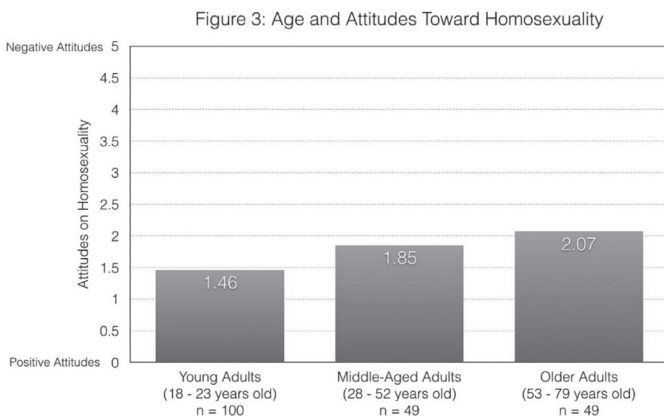
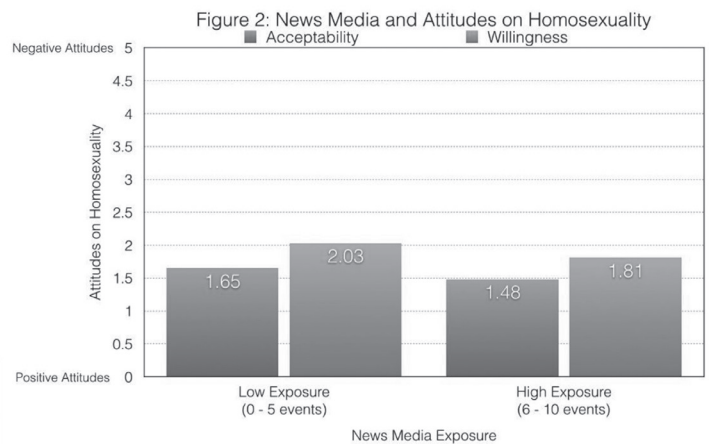
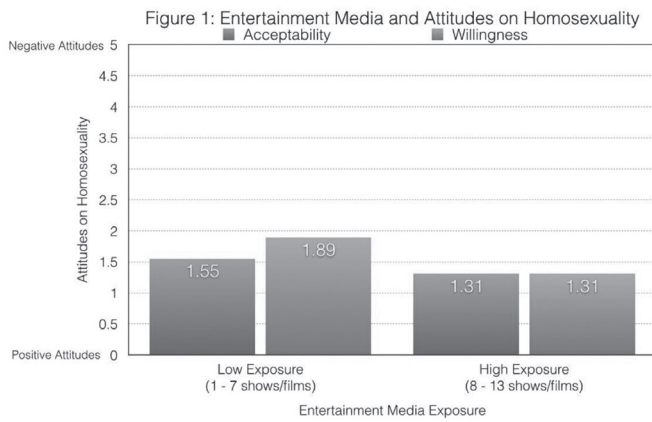
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Appendix A



Appendix B

1. You are being asked to participate in study about how media exposure influences attitudes about social issues. This survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Your responses are completely anonymous (i.e., your name is not being collected so your responses cannot be connected to you in any way). You may only complete the survey once. This study is also completely voluntary. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jennevie Fong (jennevie.fong@pepperdine.edu), Gabby Gonta (gabrielle.gonta@pepperdine.edu), Claire Fagin (madison.fagin@pepperdine.edu), and Shannon Hansen (shannon.hansen@pepperdine.edu). If you consent to participate in this study, please begin the survey now.

A. Yes, I am 18 years old or older and agree to participate

B. No, I do not wish to participate

2. On average, how much time do you spend on the following media everyday?

Television / Magazines / Newspapers / Internet / Social Media Platforms

1 Never

2 Less than 1 hour

3 1 to 2 hours

4 3 to 4 hours

5 More than 5 hours

3. How often do you engage with entertainment media platforms (including non-factual television programs and films)?

1 Never

2 Rarely

3 Sometimes

4 Very Often

5 Always

4. How often do you engage with news media platforms (including factual news broadcast, online articles, or newspapers)?

1 Never

2 Rarely

3 Sometimes

4 Very Often

5 Always

5. Have you watching the following television programs or films? (Yes or No)

Orange is the New Black / Modern Family / Glee / The L Word / Will & Grace / Brokeback Mountain / Paris is Burning / But I'm a Cheerleader / The Kids are Alright / Milk / Pretty Little Liars / 90210 / The Perks of Being a Wallflower / Best in Show / Adam & Steve / Faking It

6. How satisfied were you with these television programs or films as a form of entertainment? (If you have not seen these television programs or films, choose the N/A option)

1 Very Dissatisfied

2 Dissatisfied

3 Neutral

4 Satisfied

5 Very Satisfied

6 N/A

7. Which news platform do you use **the most** to access information?

A. Broadcast Television

B. Print Newspapers

C. Online News Articles

D. Other (please specify)

8. How often are you exposed to issues and events about gay rights and homosexuality in the news media?

- 1 Never
- 2 Not Often
- 3 Sometimes
- 4 Often
- 5 Very Often

9. Were you exposed to coverage for these current events in the news? (No or Yes)

US Olympic gold medal winner Bruce Jenner reveals that she is now Caitlyn Jenner and will live as a woman.

President Barack Obama announces the designation of the first national monument to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights.

Boy Scouts of America president announces that the national executive board removes the restriction on openly gay leaders and employees.

The Supreme Court rules that states cannot ban same-sex marriage.

Secretary of Defense announces that the Military Equal Opportunity policy will now include gay and lesbian military members.

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is repealed, ending a ban on gay men and lesbians from serving openly in the military.

A symbol of pride and hope for the LGBT community, the first rainbow flag is stitched together.

The number of openly out athletes competing in the summer 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro doubles from those in London 2012.

Tammy Baldwin becomes the first openly gay politician elected to the US Senate.

The US Supreme Court rules that legally married same-sex couples are entitled to federal benefits (United States v. Windsor).

10. How much did you follow news coverage for the following issues and events?

- 1 Never
- 2 A Little
- 3 Somewhat
- 4 Often
- 5 A lot

Now, please respond to the following statements about gay rights and homosexuality.

11. I would not want to have a homosexual friend

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

12. I would look for a new place to live if I found out that my roommate is gay

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

13. I won’t associate with known homosexuals if I can help it

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

14. Homosexuality is a mental illness

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

15. I would be afraid for my child to have a homosexual teacher
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
16. Gays dislike members of the opposite sex
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
17. I find the thought of homosexual acts disgusting
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
18. Homosexuals are more likely to commit deviant sexual acts, such as child molestation, rape, and voyeurism (Peeping Toms), than are heterosexuals
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
19. Homosexuals should be kept separate from the rest of society (i.e., separate housing, restricted employment)
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
20. Two individual of the same sex holding hands or displaying affection in public is revolting
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
21. The love between two males or two females is quite different from the love between two persons of the opposite sex
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
22. I see the gay movement as a negative thing
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
23. Homosexuality, as far as I'm concerned, is sinful
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
24. I would not want to be employed by a homosexual
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
25. Homosexuals should be forced to have psychological treatment
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
26. I do not have a desire to learn more about local and national resources to support LGBTQ people
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
27. I do not have a desire to learn more about the challenges LGBTQ people face
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree
28. I do not have a desire to know more about same-sex marriage law
- 1 Disagree
 - 2 Slightly Disagree
 - 3 Neutral
 - 4 Slightly Agree
 - 5 Agree

29. I would not want to hear a homosexual talk about his or her “coming out” experience

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

30. I would prefer not to be seen in public with someone who is openly homosexual

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

31. I would prefer not to introduce my child to an openly homosexual male or female

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

32. I would prefer not to see a homosexual couple exhibit PDA

- 1 Disagree
- 2 Slightly Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Slightly Agree
- 5 Agree

Finally, please answer the following questions about yourself:

33. Are you male or female?

- A. Male
- B. Female

34. What is your age?

35. Do you identify with any of the following religions? (Please select all that apply.)

- A. Protestantism
- B. Catholicism
- C. Christianity
- D. Judaism
- E. Islam
- F. Buddhism
- G. Hinduism
- H. No religion
- I. Other

Scott Hutchins Explains His SGA Resignation

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Note: An earlier version of this article was published on Pepperdine Graphic Media Online on Dec. 11, 2016

After sitting tensely in front of his computer for two hours, junior Scott Hutchins submitted a Facebook post that he said he had been waiting to post since the beginning of the school year. With feelings of anxiousness and nervousness, he pressed the “post” button and immediately shut his laptop.

Hutchins announced his resignation as SGA Junior Class President on the “Class of 2018” Facebook page Nov. 2 without an explicit explanation to his peers.

Within several minutes, he said he received countless Facebook messages and texts from people asking why he was resigning. Later that weekend, Hutchins attended an ICA conference where even more people asked him why he was leaving his position. He said he realized that he had the choice to lie about his absence or be open about it.

In doing so, Hutchin’s transparency with his student body shows value in communicating ethically with his peers.

Scott Hutchins will take a leave of absence for this semester in order to complete his gender transition into a woman, he said. He said he wants to be open with his story to try to help other people in a similar situation.

“I’ve always had the question of ‘Do I want to transition from male to female?’” Hutchins said. “I never thought a lot about doing it until I got into college because I was able to break away from my family and started to establish my own identity.”

“College gave me the time to deal with a lot of issues that had always been there,” Hutchins said. At the beginning of college, he said he started seeing a therapist who helped him reach the conclusion that it was time to begin his transition.

Since the beginning of college, he said he slowly began to physically transition his body by going through medical procedures, such as hormone treatments and hair removal procedures, to alter his appearance. This semester, Hutchins will complete the transition medi-

cally, emotionally and socially by engaging with people as a female.

Hutchins said he knew that he identified himself as a female from a very young age. In the third grade, he researched transgenders and the process of transitioning. When he was 15 years old, he verbally expressed that he was a woman for the first time to one of his best friends.

“It’s almost like it just came out,” Hutchins said. “I didn’t even mean to let it out since I had been so used to holding it in and brushing it under the rug.”

Despite these overwhelming feelings, Hutchins said he was still uncertain whether he would ever transition at that age.

In the past few years, Hutchins said there were two motivating factors that encouraged him to transition: Watching Caitlyn (formerly Bruce) Jenner’s interview announcing her own gender transition on ABC’s 20/20 and strong support from his family and friends.

Hutchins said that Jenner’s interview “made it so much more real for [him], like normal and successful people do this and people are OK when they do it.” He said the interview pushed him forward to finish his transition at full speed.

There was also strong encouragement from Hutchins’ friends, both within and outside the Pepperdine community. One of his closest friends, Ella Giselle, who is not a Pepperdine student, has undergone her own gender transition.

“I think the importance of having friends that have already gone through it is something different than what a therapist will offer you,” Giselle said. “It’s good for mental stability to have someone to go through it with you and endure it with.”

As Giselle said she is always happy to answer his questions, she explained that this is a reciprocal support system.

“I’ve already come out and have been living full time as my newer self,” Giselle said. “But Scott is my support too; you always need support.”

Hutchins said that Giselle and other trans people told him they wish they had transitioned sooner, which

made him realize he should prioritize his transition as “everything else can wait.”

Before transitioning, Hutchins said he was gay because he believed it would be easier for people to accept him; but he knew deep down he was not gay.

He is openly involved in the LGBTQ community at Pepperdine as the chair of the LGBTQ+ committee in SGA and a member of Crossroads, the university’s first LGBTQ+ club. Hutchins said he was a strong advocate in the creation Crossroads in SGA by voting on resolution supporting the club and their constitution.

“I really did that not just for myself, being in that community, but for the school to really bring them forward,” Hutchins said. “I feel like the climate is moving in the right direction regarding LGBTQ issues.”

Hutchins said he hoped the establishment of Crossroads would make him feel more accepted, not just by students but by faculty, staff, and administration.

Hutchins also said the administration should create

specific policies for transgender students, specifically with housing guidelines. During his sophomore year, Hutchins had to request for housing exemption in order to live off-campus.

By doing this, Hutchins is affecting change throughout other realms of the school, going beyond the social aspect and creating policy that will help other students.

“If you’re a new student here and transitioning, where are you going to live?” Hutchins asked. “The male dorms or the female dorms? They need to come up with some specific policies in that and I would really like to be involved with that process in the future.”

Hutchins said he wanted to give a voice to the trans people, especially those who are not open about their transition, here at Pepperdine.

“Everyone has their own reasons for not being out,” he said. “I really want to be their voice, normalize the issue, and let people know who are struggling that they are not alone.”

Hutchins plans to return to Pepperdine for the fall 2017 semester and re-introduce himself with a new name and look.

“I am apprehensive about students heckling me,” Hutchins said. “It still worries me, but I think that once people see and meet me, they will realize that I am the same person, but just looking differently.”

He said he hopes to continue his involvement with SGA. Regarding his position as Junior Class President, he said it is important to him that his replacement is someone who is familiar with the job and shows a strong interest in it.

Hutchins said he hopes the Pepperdine community can keep an open mind and think critically about gender, gender roles and how they are created. Since there are not many open transgender students at the school, he finds this experience “a bit nerve-wracking.”

Hutchins said he understands people are curious

about the process and is happy to answer their questions, but he encourages his peers to think about the type of questions they are asking.

Giselle said the biggest mistake anyone could make

is to idly watch and not ask questions. She said people should not be concerned if the question is “wrong” because that is how they will learn about the process.


“People always ask me about my physical appearance,” Hutchins said. “They’ve been asking me a lot about my hair, my skin and my nose.”

Aside from the physical changes, Hutchins said there is an emotional aspect to transitioning that not many people consider.

“Nobody ever asks me ‘How are you doing?’ when I tell them I am transitioning,” Hutchins added. “I feel like they are not concerned about me. As a friend and a classmate, I feel like people should be concerned with how [I am] doing but no one instantly thinks of that.”



Photo courtesy of Scott Hutchins

To read more about Crossroads, Seaver’s first LGBTQ Club, head to Pepperdine Digital Commons at digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/pjcr, where you can find exclusive online PJCR content. 

DIVERSITY IN...

Gender



Female Sexualization: A Cultural Glass Ceiling

Rachel Littauer
Pepperdine University
Currents Magazine

Note: An earlier version of this article was published in the Spring 2016 edition of Currents Magazine

As a young, burgeoning actress in LA, Susan Salas sat across the table from her male interviewer during the audition process. The man looked Salas up and down and said, “If you got yourself a really big ‘tit-job’ and bleached your hair blonde, honey, you’re just gonna be huge.”

Salas, now a professor of Media Production and Director of Broadcasting at Pepperdine, stood up from the table, shook his hand and thanked him for his time. To which he replied immediately, “We aren’t done.”

“Yes, yes we are,” she responded, then walked out of the room, closing the door behind her.

“I would never want to work for a person like that. I don’t care how much money,” Salas said, recounting the incident.

Being sexual and being sexy are different. Being sexual involves males and females and the ability to reproduce. Being sexy involves attractiveness and exciting sexual appeal. Women are sexual creatures, but they don’t always have to be sexy.

At some point, society decided that certain body parts, other than sexual organs, were inappropriate and needed to be covered up. Much like foul language, sexualization is relatively arbitrary, a concept that evolved over time to become a cultural norm. Of course, the origins of modesty are deeply rooted in history, and modesty varies greatly between different cultures and religions. But for the most part, it seems to be something societies simply constructed.

It only takes one glance at popular culture to see that women are hypersexualized. From movies and video games to magazine advertisements and Instagram posts, one can easily find a plethora of scantily clad women posing in a variety of provocative positions. It has become so commonplace that most of us aren’t surprised. But why?

To start, let’s direct our attention to the entertain-

ment industry. If one has watched a single episode of *House of Cards*, seen Beyonce in concert or flipped through the Sports Illustrated swimsuit edition, it is apparent that sex is everywhere — and it sells.

The problem isn’t the sexuality; it’s the effect it has on our minds and our perceptions of women in society.

Associate Professor of Psychology Jennifer Harriger said she believes this objectification of women is not only harmful to society as a whole but to each individual woman.

“When you treat a woman as an object, instead of viewing her as a full person, you are tearing her body up into parts, or you’re using her sexuality to represent the entire person,” she said.

You hear most people, not just men, talk about a woman having great arms or a nice butt or great boobs, Harriger added.

“But what we’re doing is objectifying that person, because now those parts of her come to represent the whole instead of looking at her as an entire person,” Harriger said.

Once a woman has become socialized to view other women in this way, it becomes easier to self-objectify. When a woman looks at herself through a third-person lens, it is more likely that she may become depressed, have body-image issues or an eating disorder.

Harriger said research has found that when women are exposed to just three to five minutes of various advertisements or images in fashion magazines, their rates of body dissatisfaction increases. Body dissatisfaction is the most salient risk factor for an eating disorder; eating disorders can be caused by a number of things, including genetics, familial relations, media and other sociocultural factors, and psychological factors, Harriger said.

“I don’t think that you can say the media is to blame, but it definitely adds to the risk,” Harriger said.

It can be really difficult for women to detach their sense of value from their sense of beauty, because they have been socialized to do so from such a young age.

Disney movies show princes falling in love immediately with beautiful princesses, strictly because of their appearances, not because of their abilities. Although some of the newer movies such as *Frozen* and *Brave* are challenging gender stereotypes, the classics still exist and affect those who watch them.

Harriger advocated being more aware about the amount of time and money spent focusing on things that will make us more “beautiful.”

“Nobody benefits when a woman doesn’t feel good about herself except advertisers and marketers,” Harriger said.

They are the ones creating the need for the product, and if we stop buying, maybe it won’t be so prevalent. Additionally, women who are valued for their beauty are often seen as less competent in society’s eyes.

“It’s difficult for women in society to be viewed as sexual beings, and attractive and competent at the same time,” she said. “And so what happens in the media is the more that we sexualize women, the more we take away any power that they may have.”

Attention is not real power. Real power comes from realizing that our inherent value is constant regardless of outward appearance.

One group that is advocating strongly against the sexualization of women is the Free the Nipple campaign. The campaign



Photo by Daniel Caso

encourages women to go topless in resistance to censorship and oppression of women, according to the website’s mission statement. Supporters not only fight for general female equality but specifically for breastfeeding rights, as women are still discriminated against for breastfeeding in public spaces.

As a young woman, this movement makes me feel

two distinct ways: repelled and inspired. Although these may seem contradictory, let me explain.

Raised in a Christian household with four older brothers, I was taught how to act and dress appropriately as a woman. As a child, I found these rules quite frustrating. Why did my brothers get to run around shirtless, plunging into the pool in just their boxers when they got hot, while I had to be fully covered, and always change into a bathing suit before joining in the fun?

Why did I always wear pink and be deemed the “extra” player on the flag football team in the backyard? Because culture taught me to, and by age 11, I bought it. I no longer wanted to run around without my shirt on, because that was “weird.” I no longer wanted to be the quarterback on our backyard football team, because I believed I might get hurt.

Culture taught me what it meant to be a woman, and I thought accordingly. Cue my repulsed feeling when I first encountered the Free the Nipple campaign. Walking around topless is no way to be a proper woman, and frankly it feels incredibly inappropriate and jarring.

On second thought, however, why not shock the

public if you want change? The nature of the historical sit-ins during the Civil Rights Movement was to jolt complacent individuals

into realizing the extent of racism. That being said, the shock factor makes sense, it just may not be the right move in this circumstance.

For one, the breast is culturally defined as valued, not only sexually but in relationship to the child it is feeding. Salas said she breastfed all three of her children but did it discreetly. Walking around shirtless is

offensive and offensive to the children being fed, Salas said.

Contrastingly, as a mother of twin girls, Harriger said a woman should certainly be able to breastfeed in public and that she should feel free to do what makes her comfortable in regard to modesty.

One glaring problem with going shirtless is that discrimination could still exist, if not intensify. Some women are often just as brutal as men in discrimination and can be quite cruel to one another, Salas said.

“We’re so judgmental of each other,” Salas said. “And I truly think [change] should start with women. I don’t think it needs to start with men or media; I think it’s about how women treat each other.”

As a producer, actress and current professor, Salas has seen much of the interaction between women and the media over the years. Her first job out of graduate school was producing for an ad agency in Chicago at 22 years old. She then went on to be an associate producer and full producer by the time she was 24. As a young woman, Salas was in charge of 50-man crews on production sites and felt very little discrimination based on her gender. She said she felt like she was considered one of the guys and was respected for it.

“I was valued. I was never hit on. I was respected, and on location it didn’t matter,” she said.

As an actress, however, Salas encountered firsthand the idea that women are valued for their bodies. The most bothersome part is that this sentiment instills in women the feeling that their self worth is judged by the size of their breasts and their artificial image. And it’s often women who are making that judgment, Salas said.

Salas said culture will hopefully change if women speak with more mindfulness to little girls. When our culture shows little girls dancing like strippers, that reinforces to younger and younger girls that value is based on appearance, Salas said.

“Mindfulness and loving each other: That’s where I think it will start, and it has to start with little girls,” Salas said.

One organization that is seeking to do this is the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, founded by Academy Award-winning actress Geena Davis to

promote improved gender balance in the media, especially in children 11 years and younger, according to the website.


The institute has conducted a number of studies, amassing the largest compilation of research regarding gender representation in the media. The goal of the institute is to provide “evidence-based solutions to systemically change gender equality issues in children’s media for the entertainment industry, businesses, educational institutions and the public,” according to the website.

Another organization promoting change is the SPARK Movement, which is an activist group working online to promote an anti-racist gender justice movement, according to their website. SPARK also promotes education and public dialogue as a way to become aware of and change the cultural attitude toward the sexualization of women.

A real surge of change will start with the youngest generation.

Education can only get us so far, as it is not enough to simply be

aware of this societal issue. We must put education into action and start treating one another as valuable human beings regardless of outward appearance. Whether that means joining one of these powerful organizations, leading a focus group with young girls or simply learning to love ourselves and reflecting that to other people, this issue can be solved.

Value does not come from beauty, nor does it come from feeling better or worse than the women and men around us. Value comes from love. Plenty of us believe this — it’s just a matter of modeling it. 

“Culture taught me what it meant to be a woman, and I responded accordingly.”

Boy Shoes

Rachel Yoshimura

Pepperdine University

Assigned in ENG 101: English Composition (Dr. Jeffrey Schultz)

To read the research paper that inspired Boy Shoes, visit digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/pjcr/ for online content

“Gender is a source of identity for many people.” I stare at this sentence with my finger hovering over the delete key. After the third time reading this sentence back to myself, I check the alarm clock on my desk – 5:34 AM. The deadline for my final paper is two hours away, and though I know I shouldn’t be caught up on the introduction of my 25-page research paper, I can’t seem to finish it. Though this paper is supposed to answer questions about gender, the longer I spend writing it the more complexity I find in the topic. Additionally, the longer I spend without sleep the harder it is for me to concentrate.

“Gender is a source of identity for many people.” I linger over the words. It is neither the phrasing of the sentence nor the lack of complex vocabulary that is preventing me from moving on; I am not sure if this sentence is true. In my early childhood, this statement was not true for me. I was the boy my dad always wanted. He prayed for three sons, and so in turn, he got three daughters. By the time I, the third girl, came out, my father had ceased his prayers and decided to work with what he had been given. He signed me up for a baseball team and dressed me in pants that zipped off at the knees. I had an awkward haircut that resembled a mushroom and always wore camouflage. But I absolutely loved it. I played kickball at recess while the other girls in the fourth grade pretended to be kittens, and I boastfully held the title of Champion Arm-Wrestler in my class. Looking back on my younger years, the only thing I regret is not following my mom’s advice to wear a much-needed bra until the 7th grade.

When I needed to get ready for school, my mom would already be at work, and thus my dad helped assemble my outfits all throughout elementary school. Though my mom loved spending time with my sisters and me, her job stole her away from 7 AM to 8 PM. My dad worked very flexible hours, so in addition to arranging my wardrobe, he cooked us dinner, picked us up from school, and brushed our hair. My dad’s painful hair brushing was the reason I got my easy-to-maintain mushroom haircut. My dad often didn’t know

what he was doing, but my sisters and I enjoyed his attempts and would pretend to like his food concoctions (i.e., the fried rice with sugar, the hybrid meatloaf-spaghetti casserole, and the grilled cheese lasagna, which was surprisingly edible).

Growing up, I didn’t know about traditional gender roles because they never had a place in my home. My parents were equal partners that assumed different roles according to the needs of each circumstance. My mother taught me about independence and fearlessness. My father taught me about sacrifice and having the courage to try new things. As I got older, I began to notice that my family did not look the same as most of my friends’ families. I hardly ever saw my friend’s fathers; their moms would be the ones to build us forts during sleepovers and cook us banana pancakes in the morning.

It is now 5:59 in the morning according to my alarm clock. If I keep getting lost in my thoughts like this, I am never going to finish this paper. I catch my reflection in the mirror that sits behind my laptop. The bags under my eyes cast small shadows onto my cheeks, and my disheveled hair has half fallen out of my bun. Sometimes I wish I had kept my short hair; even though it was an awful bowl cut, at least it wasn’t a hassle to deal with. I still don’t act like most girls my age, so why look like them? Now I wear skirts instead of the zipper pants, but even in college the majority of my friends are men. The Polaroid my best friend, Joe, gave me for Christmas still sits on my desk leaning against my cup of pens. The glossy picture of us with our surfboards has a yellow tinge from my overheated lamp. The bottom of the picture reads, “Surf bros are better than hoes.” I realize this caption seems rude by simultaneously calling me a man and calling other woman hoes, but that is the kind of humor Joe and I share. I often wonder if my crude humor is a result of having mostly male friends. I wonder what other things are different about me because I spend so much time with guys. I know it has affected the way people speak about me; people have described me to others as a “bro” and a “real homie.” Though I used to take much

pride in calling myself a tomboy, now I find it off-putting that I only thought of myself as tough because I viewed myself as “one of the boys.” I was strong if I was like the boys in my elementary school. I was logical if I wasn’t emotional like the girls in my high school.

The top right corner of my laptop reads 6:11 AM. My cursor blinks at the end of the sentence beneath the heading, “Introduction.” I have saved my introduction for last, as Professor Stevens taught me, but I cannot bring myself to continue writing. As my title states, my paper is about “Perceiving Sex in Text Messages.” The core of my paper is about whether people can tell someone’s sex by solely looking at their text messages. For my study, I sent out a survey containing screenshots of text messages and asked people to guess the sexes of the people texting. Out of 108 responses, 82% of the time people were correct. My professor was ecstatic when I told her the results of my survey, and I was too, at first. But then I began writing my final paper and found it difficult to draw conclusions from my study.

I based my study off of Deborah Tannen’s Genderlect Theory, which states that masculine and feminine communication should be viewed as two unique categories and male-female interactions should be viewed as cross-cultural communication (Griffin, 2011). If taken to the extreme, this theory contends that men and women speak entirely different languages. If there is a miscommunication between two people of different sexes, the fact that they have distinct communication patterns could have caused the conflict.

When I first learned about this theory last semester, I was both intrigued and offended. I had noticed that most of my female friends used more hand gestures than my male friends, and my male friends swore more, which supported the theory. But Tannen also based her theory off of the large assumption that all males are masculine and all females are feminine. But as I learned from Cameron’s book, *Gender and the English Language*, gender is independent of sex. While someone’s sex is physically determined from birth, they are not born with a certain gender; gender is determined by a socially and psychologically created culture (Cameron, 2006). A society creates the standard for masculinity and femininity, and these standards describe how a person thinks, behaves, and communicates based on their gender. But a person’s gender may not agree with their sex. If I look at my childhood or

even now in my almost-adulthood, my gender does not always correlate with my sex.

My alarm clock flashes 6:32 AM in red numbers. This writer’s block is becoming seriously frustrating. This whole project has become frustrating. At the beginning of my study, I wanted to have the respondents answer questions about the gender of the people texting in the screenshots rather than their sex, but my professor advised against it. She told me the survey would be too complex if I tried to explain the concept of gender and how it can conflict with sex, and that it would confuse my participants and skew the results. In addition, she told me to pick screenshots that included the communication traits specific to each sex. For example, my previous research found that men send short messages and women use more emoticons, so I chose screenshots that showed these differences. The results of my survey were clear and supported my hypothesis, but my study really tested whether people knew the gender stereotypes within texting. This whole project seems redundant now — I conducted a study that showed people know the gender stereotypes that our society has created.

I originally chose this topic for my research paper because I thought it would be unique and interesting; however at this point in the semester it seems like every class I’m taking is discussing the social issues surrounding gender in our society. Even my least favorite class, Political Science, covered the topic of women in politics last week. My professor showed us a poll conducted by Gallup, CNN, and *USA Today* over several decades about the public opinion on voting for a woman president. The question used for polling in 2003 was as follows: “If your party nominated a generally well-qualified person for president who happened to be a woman, would you vote for that person?” (Gallup, CNN, and *USA Today* 2). The results of the study showed that more people answered yes to the question as years progressed, but the study’s question was merely hypothetical. My professor explained that the study’s results were heavily influenced by the social desirability effect, meaning the participants probably answered yes to the question not because they would vote for a woman president but because yes seemed like the “politically correct” answer. Even if someone’s actual opinion does not support a woman being president, they know they *should* say they support it.

Although I understood what my professor was

saying about social desirability creating false results in the poll, I could only focus on the question of the study: “a generally well-qualified person... who happened to be a woman.” Was this saying that well-qualified and woman are adjectives not usually embodied by the same person? Maybe that is a dramatization of the question, but the researchers still felt the need to specify that the woman candidate would in fact have respectable credentials. If the question were about a male candidate, I doubt the researchers would have specified that the man would be well-qualified—it would just be assumed. But maybe I was reading too much into it.

My clock now reads 6:49 AM. These tangents are not helping me finish this paper.

I decide to take a break and begin changing for work. I often become so consumed in my schoolwork that I just want to lie in a room and stare at the ceiling for hours, but working at Saint Joseph’s Preschool keeps me sane. Every Tuesday and Friday morning, I pile into a van with Jayelle, Diane, Caroline, and Melissa. As soon as our team walks through Saint Joseph’s doors, we dive into recess time with our kids. With the children’s imagination, the playground transforms into a volcano planet, a princess castle, and an underwater spider web.

Two weeks ago as I watched Philip lead a game of Stoplight, I was reminded of a book I found while doing research for my final paper. The book was titled *Voices: A Selection of Multicultural Readings*. In section three of her book, Kathleen S. Verderber (1995) examines how boys and girls learn the norms of communication by observing how children play. According to her book, girls play games that are collaborative, begin with a conversation to establish roles, and have no external rules. In contrast, boys play games that are meant to achieve a specific goal and have rigid rules. When boys communicate, it is for the sake of “emphasizing individuality and competition” (p. 21). Boys try to be in the spotlight and try to one-up each other.

Philip, who stood at the edge of the fake grass of the playground, began to yell at Nicolo who had been crawling instead of skipping. The rest of my Jumpstart team and I began to gravitate toward the commotion. “Nicolo!” Philip screamed. “I told you, this round is *skipping* not crawling. Everyone else was skipping like I said, why aren’t you? Do you know what skipping is? If you keep messing up Mateo and Alejandro are going

to win!”

Melissa and I looked at each other in disbelief. Jayelle could not contain her laughter. There was so much frustration and anger in such a little boy. I wondered why he was so upset. I wondered where he learned to yell like that.

My alarm clock snaps me out of my flashback as it begins to blare, and I run over to my desk to silence it. 7:00 AM. Why must my paper be due the same morning I have work? I just want to play with my kids. I am not sure if it’s my “maternal clocking” kicking in as they call it (whoever “they” are), but I have become more infatuated with the cuteness of the preschoolers. My phone is filled with pictures of Cole wearing his Finding Nemo jacket, Alvin climbing on my back, and Mateo camped out on my lap. Though I love scrolling through the picture to brag about my students to my friends, the photos cannot fully capture all of the memories I have made at Saint Joseph’s. Some memories were funny while others were awkward, and some situations were both. My Jumpstart team’s favorite thing to do on the van ride back to Pepperdine is to exchange funny anecdotes or stories about the most inappropriate things our kids say. Last month, I made my coworkers roll with laughter when I told them what happened with Mateo after recess.

One Tuesday as the class gathered for snack time, Mateo stumbled over and plopped down in front of me. He peered up at me, with his eyebrows scrunched and asked, “Why are you dressed like a girl today?”

I could not hide the shock on my face. “What do you mean?” I asked, more confused than offended. He climbed over my crisscrossed legs and touched the thin, laced headband in my hair.

I touched my hairband and looked down at him. “Because I am a girl,” I stated simply.

Mateo pulled his brows together and glared at me, “No you’re not.”

Unsure of how to respond and not looking to argue with a four year old, I awkwardly turned my attention to the rest of the class and Mateo eventually did the same.

The funniest part of the story is that this kept happening. Mateo continued to call me a boy for the next week, not in a teasing manner but as if he was trying to prove me wrong. When I asked him why he thought I was a boy, he scanned me from head to toe and said, “You have boy shoes.” I looked down at my black

slip-on shoes. They were covered with little plastic bumps that made them look glittered in the sunlight.

When I retold this story to my Jumpstart team, they burst out in laughter and shock. We all were required to wear the same uniform clothing. If anything, I wore the most makeup out of our team, and yet I was the one Mateo thought was a boy. As incidences like that repeated with Mateo, I stopped laughing about them. On the van rides back to Pepperdine, I started to brainstorm about how I could explain that I was a girl to Mateo. He was four years old, and I was pretty sure his parents would not appreciate me educating him about female anatomy when I was supposed to be teaching him the alphabet.

I wondered what Mateo's parents were like. Did his mother work all day like mine? Or was she the one making paper bag lunches for him and kissing him goodnight? His mom must be very feminine, I thought. I didn't want to jump to the conclusion that his confusion about my sex stemmed from being exposed to traditional gender roles, but that's the first explanation that came to mind. After all, my parents shaped the way I view gender.

I thought explaining to Mateo that I am a girl because I have long hair, but there were boys in Saint Joseph's Preschool with long hair. I wanted to say I am a girl because I wear makeup and skirts, but that wasn't the true way to describe what makes me female. Every explanation I came up with contained the gender stereotypes and roles I debated against in my political science class and wrote about in the previous research section of my communication paper. Discussing these social issues with my classmates and professors made gender and sex seem so simple, but I stood in front of Mateo so many times unable to formulate an explanation.

The backup alarm on my phone begins to sound. 7:15 AM. The sunlight begins to stream through the slats of my blinds, and I run my fingers across the mouse pad to wake up my laptop. I know what Professor Stevens would want me to write; I would start by establishing the importance of communication and gender, and then explain each gender's distinct communication style. But my fingers begin typing something else:

"Gender can be a source of identity for many people; their masculinity or femininity allows them to belong to a larger group of people who share common mannerisms


and traits. But one's sex does not determine one's gender, and these categories of stereotypical traits do not define a person."

I finish the introduction, proofread the procedures and results of my survey, and then pull up the website to submit my paper. I turn in my 25-page final at exactly 7:28 AM with 2 minutes to spare. I release a deep sigh of both relief and exhaustion. I close my laptop and go to the bathroom to brush my teeth. My freshmen year of college is coming to an end and today is my last day at Saint Joseph's Preschool. I honestly may cry as we get in the van and drive away for the last time; I will miss our little Jumpstart friends. Next year I will be studying abroad, and I will probably have an internship instead of working at Jumpstart my junior year. Unless by some stroke of luck, I bump into one of them as I walk the streets of Santa Monica, I may never see the children after today.

I imagine what Mateo will be like when he gets older: his shaggy light hair will probably darken and he will trade his Ninja Turtles clothes for fitted Polos. I hope he becomes the kind of guy who wears ironic t-shirts. One day, maybe he will be sitting behind his laptop until an ungodly hour, typing a final paper about how he once thought his Jumpstart teacher was a boy.

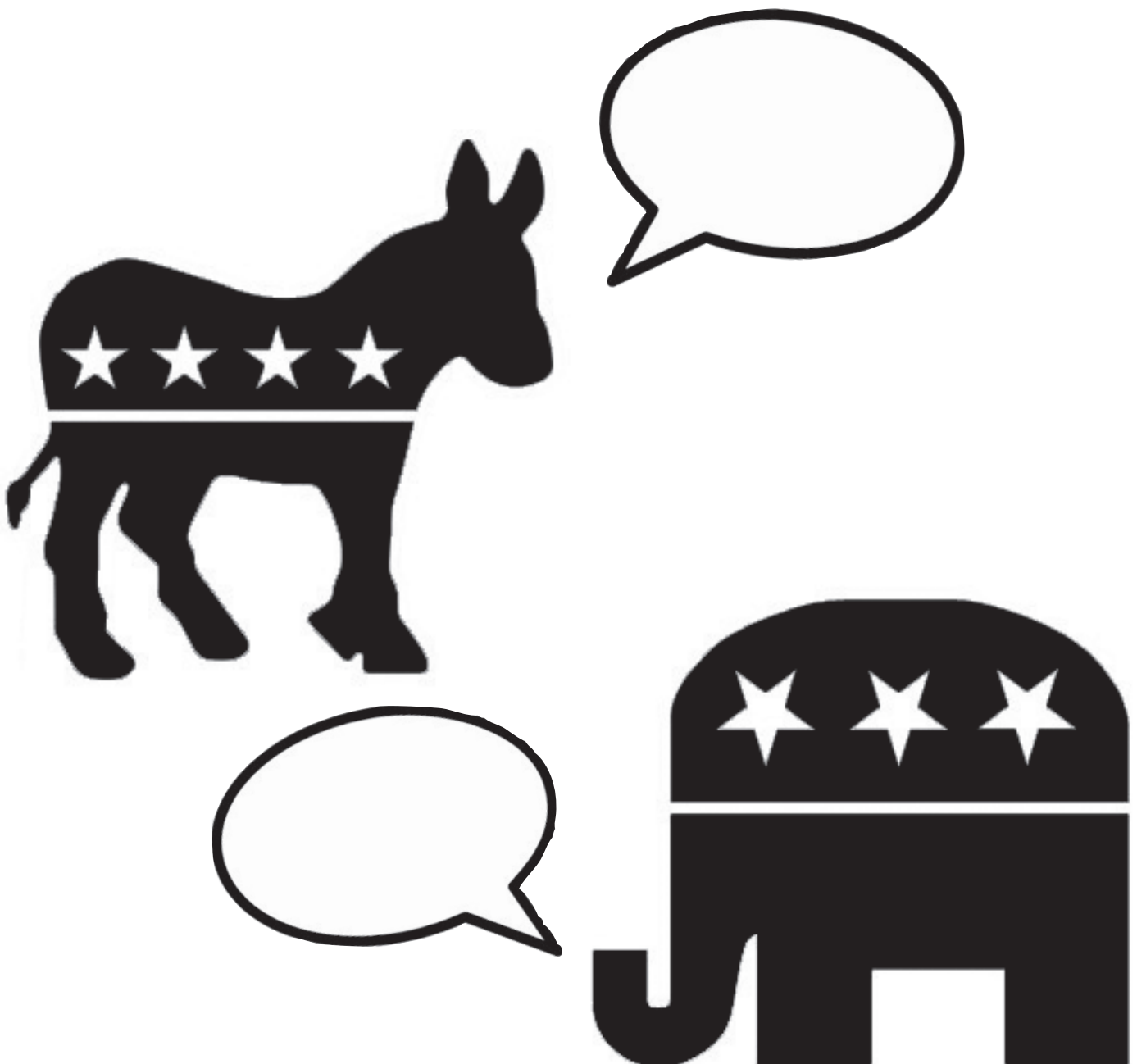
I don't know what I am going to say to him when I leave the classroom for the last time today. He doesn't give anyone hugs, but I may be able to squeeze one out of him. I place my wallet in my purse and check the time on my phone – 7:34 AM. I am going to be late. I turn off my desk lamp, put on my boy shoes, and walk to the parking lot to meet my Jumpstart team.

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DIVERSITY IN...

Politics



The Burden of Conformity
 Caroline Rubach
 Pepperdine University
Independent Submission, Sculpture



This sculpture, entitled “The Burden of Conformity,” was created with the intention of capturing the anguish, anxiety, and hardship that comes from being expected to conform or assimilate to a culture or identity that you do not feel that you belong to. This piece fits into the theme of *Voices of Diversity* because it directly portrays the struggles that people inherently endure in the face of expected assimilation, which is what the conversation relating to diversity and inclusion is attempting to expose and reshape. In regards to communication, the curved form of the piece is meant to signify the inevitable and undeniable pull into conformity that individuals face due to societal and cultural expectations and norms; the words we communicate with others and the stories we tell are always shaped by these expectations and norms and cannot be separated or freed from them.

Now the questions are:

How are we victims of the cycle? How are we contributors to the cycle?

And how can we become cycle-breakers in an effort to stand for freedom for those who may not systemically have the ground to stand on in order to break free? 

Making America Great Again: The Difference Between Being “Anti-Immigration” and “Anti-Immigrant”

Mason Folsie

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The Odyssey Online

Note: An earlier version of this article was published on The Odyssey Online on Feb. 15, 2016

I love being American. Despite our many faults, I grew up just knowing that America is a place of freedom and equality and that the American people are moral and strong. We were founded to escape religious persecution, and we are proud to preach for the world to hear about our freedom of religion, speech and our commitment to equal treatment of all people.

Then why am I ashamed of us? Why am I hearing hateful talk about Mexican workers, ignorant bashing of the Islamic faith and a complete disregard for everything our country is supposed to stand for?

I'm not here to comment on immigration reform or to push a political agenda. I don't have a solution. I'm just confused as to why the moral, strong people of America have so much hate in their hearts.

I wonder how we keep making the same mistakes. How many times are we going to do this? Why were we biased against women, African-Americans, the LGBTQ community and countless other populations? Why are we doing it today? Why haven't we learned?

The phrase “anti-immigration” means that we oppose the act of people moving into our country. The phrase “anti-immigrant,” on the other hand, implies the ethnocentric attitudes we've been exhibiting toward people outside of the United States.

The issue is not whether or not we should allow immigrants to cross our borders. The issue is the way we talk and think about the *human beings* who want to join our home.

If the phrase “anti-immigrant” isn't the most “anti-American” set of words I have ever heard, I'm not sure what is. America can't be anti-immigrant. Immigrants are people, and we are supposed to value all people. We are the land of equality.

We are a country of immigrants. We always have been. Isn't it ironic how those who claim to be looking out for the integrity of America with spiteful prejudices are really just turning their backs on their ancestors

and their country's foundation?

Regardless of whether we choose to allow more immigrants into our country, we need to stop bashing them as people. We can't continue to act as though it's “us” versus “them.” Not so long ago, we were “them” as well. Separate from whether or not they become new Americans, we simply can't be against people in search of a better life.

As President Obama aptly noted, “how quickly we forget. One generation passes, two [generations pass], and suddenly we don't remember where we came from.” So quickly we feel entitled to shut the door on others, though the door was held open for us.

As it says on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tossed, to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”

You'd be hard-pressed to find an American who would blatantly support bigotry and racism, but our actions are speaking louder than our words. I don't want to be ashamed of my country's people. I don't want to see them cheering and clapping at anti-Muslim rallies or supporting deportation of second generation Americans.

If we are truly committed to “making America great again,” we need to teach our people to accept those who are different than us. We need to remember that it was once we who journeyed to America in search of a better life. As it always has been, the United States is a place for moral, strong, accepting people.

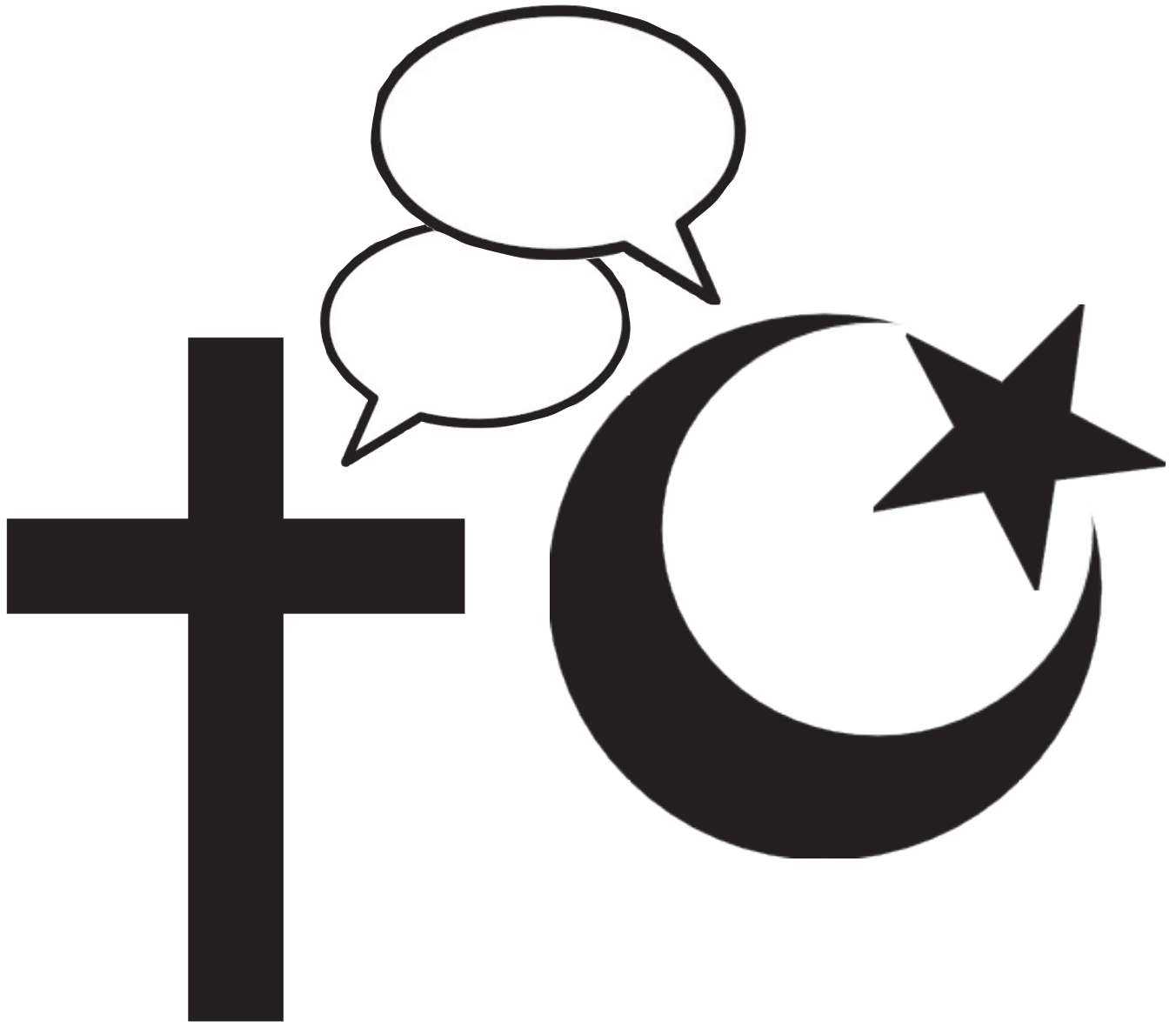
We aren't the only ones in pursuit of life, liberty and happiness.

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DIVERSITY IN...

Religion



An Era of Islamophobia: The Muslim Immigrant Experience in America

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Assigned in COM 515: Intercultural Communication: Case Studies (Dr. Charles Choi)

Introduction

As the world is becoming increasingly globalized, cultures and religions collide on the international arena. One eminent cultural clash is between Eastern-Muslim and Western-Christian people groups. Ranging from a commoner's pursuit of better education and life to a refugee seeking to escape from a war-torn society, many Muslims are immigrating to foreign Western countries, particularly to the United States.

As a country that prides itself on being an inclusive land of diversity that stands for equal opportunity, the United States is a major destination for immigration. However, due to the differing beliefs and values that Muslim immigrants and American Christians hold, Muslim immigration proves to be an issue. With a history of Islamic extremism across Western countries, as shown by the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Muslim immigrants have been heavily stigmatized and discriminated against by many Americans. Thus, Muslim immigrants face many obstacles as they try to integrate into American society.

This issue has been exacerbated by President Trump's administration. With Trump's ultimate goal for America to have a Muslim ban from seven predominantly Muslim countries, the country is divided on this issue (Yuhas & Sidahmed, 2017). Thus, as a prevalent, ever-changing, and controversial issue, this conflict between Muslim immigrants and Americans is worthy of study. Conservative White Christian American perspectives generally agree with President Trump in seeing Muslim Americans as threats to American society that we need to keep out of America (Yuhas & Sidahmed, 2017)

This case study will examine both Muslim American and conservative White Christian American attitudes to identify the issues that prevent Muslim immigrants from integrating into American society. Additionally, it will investigate the various similarities and differences between conservative White Christian Americans and Muslim Americans in order to capitalize on what unifies the two groups rather than what separates them. To better analyze this conflict, the acculturation model will be used as a lens to understand this issue.

History and Identification of Issues

Muslim Americans, especially recently, have had difficulties properly integrating into American society. A pervasive reason for this is due to what Americans refer to as "Islamophobia", or the irrational fear of Muslim Americans being terrorists.

Islamophobia has stemmed from the 2001 September 11 terrorist attacks. With the fear inflicted on Americans on September 11, mainstream American media has skewed the Muslim American identity to be perceived by the general public as a threat to the American way of life. Hollywood along with general American media outlets have created a vivid picture of the terrorists that Muslim Americans can hypothetically be. This cycle of Americans perceiving Muslim immigrant terrorism has thus far been perpetuated.

Muslim Americans have faced increased struggles in the United States since President Donald Trump proposed an executive order banning Muslim immigrants from entering the United States (Yuhas & Sidahmed, 2017). Many have praised the ban for its anti-Muslim sentiments, but it is important to understand Muslim Americans and what is preventing them from successfully integrating into American society.

In large part, Muslim Americans have been ostracized and demonized as "the terrorist waiting to strike", and because of this prejudice they have not been given any chance to be fully incorporated as American citizens in the United States. One must investigate and understand the current climate of America and how Muslim

immigrants are factored into American society today to understand how to better integrate them into American culture.

Context of Immigration

Immigration is not something that is specific to just Muslim Americans as many groups of people have immigrated to America. For example, Jewish Americans are a group similar to Muslim Americans in that both of them have distinct religious viewpoints that characterize their culture. The difference, however, between these two groups is that Jewish Americans have successfully integrated into American society and no longer have a negative stigma attached to their name. On the other hand, many Muslim Americans have still not yet been able to fully integrate into American society and fail to rid themselves of the negative viewpoints American citizens hold of them.

Muslim immigrants have yet to achieve the same level of success as their Jewish counterparts. The first wave of Muslim immigrants can be traced from the arrival of African slaves in the 1700s. However, they were denied religious freedom and many were forced to convert to Christianity. The next significant wave of Muslim immigrants arrived in the 19th -20th century. This group of immigrants was mostly from Arab countries. Last, following the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, large numbers of Muslim immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia arrived in the US for employment opportunities. This is because the Act of 1965 abolished the quota system based on national origins. Instead, it focused primarily on skillset and family connections to US citizens (“The Truth About Muslim-Americans,” n.d.).

However, as the Muslim-Arab culture is alien to many conservative White Christian Americans, Muslim immigrants face resistance and discrimination while adopting American culture. In addition, September 11 sparked a large divide between Muslims and the American public. Following September 11, Muslims were portrayed negatively through mainstream American media as Islamophobia grew. Thus, with the prevalence of Anti-Muslim sentiments, Muslim immigrants fail to escape the stereotype of being Anti-American extremists. Thus, they struggle to assimilate or integrate into American society.

Communication Theory: Acculturation Model

As immigrants experience a new culture in the host country, they undergo the process of acculturation. This is a cultural and psychological change that results from a meeting of two cultures (Sam & Berry, 2010). Berry (1997) proposes four patterns of acculturation: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. The process of assimilation occurs when the host culture is absorbed while the home culture is rejected. Second, integration is a healthy balance of both host and home culture is achieved. Third, separation occurs as the the host culture is as the home culture is maintained. Fourth, marginalization takes place when both host and home culture are rejected. Out of the four, integration proves to be the most preferable. This is because integration enables individuals to maintain some degree of cultural integrity while fitting into the local host culture.

On the other hand, assimilation is an acculturation trend used by immigrants in America. This strategy is used when immigrants have no intent of maintaining their home cultural identity. Instead, they fully adopt the cultural norms, values, and traditions of the new host culture. Lastly, separation and marginalization are negative acculturation strategies as they involve excluding themselves from the host culture (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Additionally, as immigrants enter an unfamiliar cultural environment, they commonly undergo three stages of transition—stress-adaptation-growth (Tian & Lowe, 2014). The first stage of stress is commonly known as culture shock. As immigrants go through countless shifts in lifestyle and habits, they experience stress arising from the structure of the foreign environment (Tian & Lowe, 2014). Following the first stage, immigrants will gradually adapt to the host culture and will exhibit signs of personal growth.

Muslim American Immigrant Stakeholder Perspective

Following September 11, Muslim immigrants in the US have faced greater struggles as they acculturate to American society. With the long history of US involvement in the Middle East and the catastrophic attacks on

September 11, mainstream American media has painted a negative picture of Muslims. Portrayed as foreign threats, Muslims have faced greater hostility after September 11 (Rauf, 2016). This is a prominent social issue as Americans have dismissed Muslim immigrants as un-American. Yet, their treatment of Muslim immigrants proves to be counter-productive as they inhibit Muslim immigrants from successfully integrating (Rauf, 2016). This section aims to uncover the narratives of Muslim immigrants in the US through the acculturation model as well as the stress-adaptation-growth model. It will explore the cultural experiences of Muslim youth and emerging adults. Individuals in this age range enter a developmental period in which they form their identity (Erikson, 1980). Thus, it will ultimately reflect the difficulties and obstacles that Muslim immigrants face to negotiate a new identity. Sirin and Fine (2007) also assert that the acculturation process of youths and emerging adults exemplify the political, psychological, and social issues of American society.

The first major struggle that inhibits integration is the presence of discrimination (Sirin & Fine, 2007). September 11 was a major turning point for Muslim immigrants, as they began to face more discrimination and stereotyping (Rauf, 2016). From schools to playgrounds to shopping centers, youths reported facing daily discrimination in the public arena (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Muslim youths recounted instances during which they were called terrorists and were told to return to their home country. An 18-year-old male stated that he was shocked to be called Palestinian when he was in fact Syrian. This incident occurred after he and his family moved to a predominantly White neighborhood. This boy said that he preferred his old integrated community which had more diversity. He contended that he felt embraced by men of color and that they related well to one another (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Other youths expressed the need to bite their tongues in classroom discussions to avoid being sent to the principal. Thus, there is not only discrimination, but also a lack of openness to foreign thinking and ideals. (Sirin & Fine, 2007).

Additionally, the researchers found that the older the youths were and the longer they lived in the US, the more they would perceive discrimination. This shows how there is a systemic issue in American society that inhibits the acceptance of Muslims, even after they acculturate (Said, 2004). Furthermore, it reflects upon the fact that the perception of discrimination is dependent on age. As individuals mature and grow, they grow more self-aware and start to perceive discrimination around them (Erikson, 1980).

Second, the next major issue is a product of discrimination. Sirin and Fine (2007) assert that the identities of Muslim American youth are forms of 'hyphenated-selves.' This concept embodies the separate identities that Muslim immigrants hold due to history, socio-political climate, biography, longings, and losses (Fine, 1994). Additionally, Sirin and Fine (2007) also contend that these groups of individuals take on the fault of global conflicts. When an Islamic terrorist attack occurs in the US, Muslim immigrants are concerned for their own safety. However, the host culture (American) ironically marks them as the suspect. Thus, the 'hyphenated-selves' reflects the diaspora of Muslim immigrants. They are transnational and religiously grounded, yet they are also nationally rootless and homeless (Bhabha, 2005). With this discrimination against Muslims immigrants, they simply cannot integrate to the host culture.

This is further exemplified by a study conducted by Britto and Amer, which researched the cultural identity patterns of Arab-Muslim emerging adults through the acculturation model (2001). Prior to their research, Britto and Amer hypothesized a predominantly American identity (assimilation) to emerge. However, this was not found. Instead, only two types of Muslim cultural identities were discovered: high and moderate bicultural identities (integration) and high Arab cultural identities (separation). The absence of a high American cultural identity shows that Arab-Muslims are unable to forgo their Arab identities. This might be due to resistance and discrimination from the American society (Abraham, 1994). Moreover, it could also be associated with the need to preserve culture due to the interwoven relationship between the Muslim faith and Arab culture (Abudabbeh, 1997).

Out of the three groups, the moderate bicultural Arab-Muslims experienced the most acculturative stress and also lacked family support. These two outcomes correlate with one another as both the Muslim faith and Arab culture uphold the value of family (Britto & Brooks-Gunn, 2001). Thus, the lack of family support will affect the identity development of emerging adults. In turn, this can hinder the process of integration, which

requires the individual to negotiate a balanced cultural identity. As such, this stresses on the need for Muslim emerging adults to be highly bicultural. This calls for a strong well-functioning and supportive family to positively influence the identity development and formation in the host culture (Castillo, Conoley & Brossart, 2004). This also reflects upon the need to be accepted by the home culture as well. If emerging adults fail to surpass the acculturative stress, they will be unable to adapt and grow.

Conservative Christian American Stakeholder Perspective

This section will investigate the tensions between Muslim immigrants and conservative White Christian Americans. As America was founded upon Christian ideals and the majority of America are White people who identify as Christians, this study will use this demographic sample to represent the average American citizen. Some conservative White Christian Americans also view Islam as a religion that goes against their Christian ideals, and so their conflict with Muslim American immigrants is valid and worthy of study. Clearly there is a divide and a lack of understanding between conservative White Christian Americans and Muslim Americans regarding their religious beliefs and their ways of life. To better understand the conservative White Christian American perspective, research has been conducted in regards to their viewpoints of Muslim Americans.

A recent YouGov poll discovered that 55% of surveyed Americans hold an unfavorable opinion of Islam (Chalabi, 2017). These Islamophobic sentiments were generally more common among White Republican Americans who are 45 and older. Furthermore, hostility towards Muslims in America exists alongside a lack of familiarity with Muslim Americans. Out of those who held unfavorable views of Islam, 74 percent said they do not work with anyone who is Muslim while 68 percent stated that they do not happen to have any friends who are Muslim. Another 87 percent said that they have never been inside of a mosque. Across all religions, there is a correlation between the percentage of respondents who say they personally know members of a particular faith and the percentage of those who say they hold favorable attitudes towards members of that faith. Thus a lack of familiarity with Muslims could be a possible reason why Americans view Muslims unfavorably.

According to a Pew Research Center survey, Americans were asked to rate members of eight religious groups on a "feeling thermometer" from 0 to 100, where 0 reflects the coldest, most negative rating and 100 the warmest, most positive rating (Lipka, 2017). The respondents rated Muslims the coldest at an average of 40. In comparison, they rated atheists an average of 41. Americans viewed the six other groups (Jews, Catholics, evangelical Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and Mormons) much more warmly. Republicans were found to rate Muslims even colder with an average rating of 33 while the average among Democrats was 47. 58 percent of American respondents labeled Muslims as "fanatical," and 50 percent stated that Muslims are "violent". These statistics reveal the anti-Muslim sentiments that pervade America.

Sixty-five percent of Republicans surveyed also said that they are very concerned about the rise of Islamic extremism in the United States and sixty-eight percent believe Islam is more likely than other religions to encourage violence among its believers. Forty-nine percent believe that Muslims should be subject to more scrutiny than people of other religions.

According to a study by the Brookings Institution and the Public Religion Research Institute, Americans strongly affirm the principles of religious freedom and religious tolerance (Cox et al., 2017). Eighty-eight percent of the Americans surveyed agree that America was founded on the idea of religious freedom for all people, including religious groups that are unpopular. Ninety-five percent of Americans surveyed agree that all religious texts should be treated with respect even if they do not share the religious beliefs of those who use such texts. However, 47 percent state that the values of Islam are at odds with American values and way of life, an opinion shared by approximately two-thirds of Republicans surveyed. Nearly six out of ten white evangelical Protestants believe the values of Islam are at odds with American values.

Furthermore, nearly six out of ten Republicans believe that American Muslims are trying to establish Sharia law in the United States. This means that many conservative White Christian Americans believe that Muslim Americans have an agenda to establish their religious law in the United States when they immigrate to America. This further divides conservative White Christian Americans and Muslim Americans.

Americans are found to hold different standards when evaluating violence committed by self-identified Christians and Muslims. Eighty-three percent of Americans surveyed contend that self-proclaimed Christians who commit acts of violence in the name of Christianity are not really Christians while only 48 percent say that self-proclaimed Muslims who commit acts of violence in the name of Islam are not really Muslims.

Johnston (2016) mentions that for evangelical Christians, there is a correlation often drawn between Islam and the Anti-Christ in which Mohammed the prophet is depicted as the false prophet of revelation. This remains problematic for conservative White Christian Americans trying to accept Muslim Americans as citizens of the United States. However, Christianity and Islam also share a number of common ideals, such as peace, justice, and serving the poor. Thus, members of these faiths should feel a common moral responsibility to all since their core beliefs share liberty, equality, comradery, and social justice. Johnston (2016) also mentions that many conservative White Christian Americans fail to recognize the double standard they impose on Muslim Americans when they complain about the persecution their co-believers undergo overseas, yet turn a blind eye to the Islamophobia they exhibit at home (Johnston, 2016).

These statistics about conservative White Christian Americans and how they perceive Muslim American immigrants reveal the division between the two groups that pervades today's American society. It is clear that an action must be set in place to alleviate the tensions between these two groups to allow for a process of unification and mutual understanding.

Analysis and Evaluation

In terms of the Muslim immigrant experience in America, many immigrants do not seek to impose their ideology onto Americans. Instead, they seek to integrate to American society by practicing aspects of their home culture while adopting new values from the host culture. Unfortunately, after the attacks on September 11, it is evident that Muslim immigrants have faced increased amounts of discrimination from the majority of Americans. They are stereotyped into groups and are viewed upon as potential threats to American society.

Thus, as Sirin and Fine (2007) propose, they are 'hyphenated-selves' who live on the "fault lines of global conflict." This group of people feels a certain sense of belonging to their new culture, yet when Muslim or Arab related attacks occur, they are condemned as threats by people of their host culture. Thus, this reveals a flawed double standard Americans hold Muslim immigrants accountable to, one that needs to be abolished. Americans cannot dismiss Muslim immigrants as foreign threats if they desire for them to become more integrated to American standards of society. Conservative White Christian Americans view Muslim Americans as those who go against the American lifestyle and way of life, but these viewpoints stem from a perpetually vicious cycle of American mainstream media portraying Muslim individuals as threats to American society.

To better integrate Muslims into the larger American community, steps must be taken from both sides in order to successfully incorporate Muslim culture into American culture. The conservative White Christian American perspective of Muslims, although compelling, does not have substantial evidence to back their views up and is only a sentiment held by the majority. As shown through the acculturation model, there are certain dangers should Muslims fail to properly adopt the host culture. If Americans fail to accept Muslim immigrants, they will simply hold onto their Arab identities (separation), which is contrary to what Americans expect of immigrants.

Moreover, as many immigrants come to the United States when they are young, the lack of an accepting society will cause them to be disengaged from both home and host culture. This is dangerous as this hyphenated yet detached cultural identity makes them susceptible to radicalization. If no action is implemented to address this problem, Muslim Americans are more likely to further separate themselves from American values and are prone to radicalize and become more alienated from the culture they must integrate into. Thus, it is crucial that Muslim Americans and conservative White Christian Americans work together to create solutions that will allow for Muslim immigrants to comfortably integrate themselves into American society.

Action Plan

As Muslim American immigrants have faced many difficulties adopting the host culture of America (Assimilation and Integration), many have resorted to returning completely back to their home culture of Islam (Separation), or even disengaging themselves from both cultures (Marginalization). Because of these difficulties, Muslim Americans require a system in which they can successfully integrate into American culture, so that they are well accepted by their host culture and develop a strong sense of association and belonging.

There are many courses of action Americans can take to help better integrate Muslim Americans into the country, but they all require cooperation and effort. According to Seldman's (n.d.) research of integration policies and programs in the US and Germany, she stated that the American approach to integration has been informal, short-term, and quiet. Thus, this stresses on the need for a newly revised integration program that is structured, formal, and organized as it would make sure no immigrants are left behind. Moreover, a cultural and religious education system that educates students about Islam can also be put into place. This will ensure that future generations are more aware of Islam.

In addition, a campaign such as the Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign involving a coalition of thirty-two religious denominations and organizations in partnership with the Islamic Society of North America can also create places of solidarity and open discussion on how Muslim Americans can better be integrated into American society (Orsborn, 2016). Seldman (n.d.) also introduces the importance of external integration. This relates to America's foreign policy toward Muslim countries. Should America be more friendly toward such countries, such as through Obama's commitment to establish a long-term partnership with Muslim countries, Muslims will feel more connected and accepted (Seldman, n.d.). Last, positive media portrayal is a prominent factor that can encourage integration. Seldman (n.d.) asserts that young Muslims have the need to view positive images of Islam to successfully integrate to their new host cultures.

There are some short-term solutions that can play a part in integrating Muslim Americans into American society. Although they are short-term, they are just as important and integral in helping Muslim Americans find their place in America. Johnston (2016) states that a Pew Research poll revealed that Americans who know Muslim Americans have twice as favorable an attitude towards them than among those who do not. So a course of action would be that Americans meet and become acquaintances with Muslim Americans in their communities. Being more accepting of Muslim immigrants and being mindful of their struggles can help too. Being proactive and willing to educate oneself on Islam is also beneficial in the long run.

Rauf (2016) states that Americans have already accepted certain Muslim cuisine, such as "halal" in the form of pita, hummus, and falafel, which means that Muslim culture have started to slowly integrate into American society. It is now a matter of including other parts of Muslim culture into American society such as music, architecture, and clothing and to allow these cultural aspects to become normalized in American culture. To allow Muslim culture to become a part of American culture is ultimately the goal of integrating cultural elements of Islam into American society.

Conclusion

Muslim American immigrants in recent history have faced many difficulties acculturating to American society, specifically integrating both host and home culture. This problem stems from the negative media portrayals of Muslim Americans, which in large part are due to the September 11 attacks by Muslim terrorists on American soil. By researching both sides of the conflict, one is able to identify a clearer picture of the tensions that exist between Muslim Americans and Christian Americans. Muslim Americans face discrimination that shapes their worldview of America as well as their outlook on life. White conservative Christian Americans perpetuate this discrimination by perceiving Muslim American immigrants as threats to American society and way of life.

Despite this vicious cycle, there are solutions that can help integrate Muslim Americans into American society through various means such as a more formal and structured integration process, education, encouraging Americans to make more Muslim friends and acquaintances, and being more willing to accept Muslim culture.

These solutions provide us with possibilities on how to improve the status quo to help better integrate Muslim individuals into American society. This case study provides insight into how to create a more inviting atmosphere for Muslim American immigrants who have thus far felt isolated and detached from the rest of American society and hopefully will bring about positive change in the American community.

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Pepperdine Student Outgroup Impressions, Interactions, and Anxiety

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Assigned in COM 300: Introduction to Communication Research (Dr. Lauren Amaro)

Abstract

Uncertainty reduction theory and intergroup bias suggest that remaining in homogenous environments could lead to negative impression of outgroups. The undergraduate campus at Pepperdine University has recently seen discrimination against LGBTQ+ and the African American communities. Regarding the current charged political climate at Seaver College, the researchers hypothesized that young adult outgroup impressions were directly affected by exposure to White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant (WASP) communities, social anxiety, and self-disclosure. Research questions also asked if there was an effect of exposure to Christian culture on anxiety levels when in contact with outgroups and what other personal factors influence outgroup impression. This study tested these propositions by having 132 university students respond to a survey sent out on Facebook. The researchers ran correlational and mean differences tests to check the hypotheses and research questions. While social anxiety and self-disclosure did not prove to be significant influencers, there was a strong correlation between time spent in WASP communities and negative outgroup impression.

Pepperdine University's student body is predominantly white and Christian (Admission Fast Facts). The Seaver College 2016-2017 school year included \$50,022 in tuition and fees in addition to \$14,330 in room and board (U.S. News & World Report). Additionally, Pepperdine offers study abroad programs with courses offered in Malibu, Germany, England, Italy, Switzerland, Argentina, China, and Washington D.C. (U.S. News & World Report). The U.S. News & World Report recently ranked Pepperdine as #50 overall in the nation based on their performance across indicators of excellence. Pepperdine University is a Church of Christ institution, which is generally a more conservative denomination of Christianity (A Place of Faith). Many students are attracted to Pepperdine for its spiritual life, especially if they have come from a similar faith background. Students exposed to a consistently homogenous community have shown to impact the Seaver College campus.

Events in the past year at Seaver College have highlighted discrimination of outgroups on campus. Two women athletes have filed a lawsuit against Pepperdine University and the women's basketball coach for being subject of discrimination against their sexual orientation and relationship status (The Graphic). Furthermore, a case of "blackface" and anonymous social media posts labeling other ethnicities "monkeys" lead to a student demonstration in the cafeteria (McPike, 2016; Sanford, 2016).

Efforts have been made by the administration of Pepperdine University to respond to these events with inclusivity. The first LGBTQ+ club at Seaver College, Crossroads, was established in 2016 (Littauer, 2016). Additionally, the Black Student Association has been leading the efforts to add a new diversity class as part of a general education requirement (Mason, 2016). However, there is no guarantee that these efforts will eradicate poor treatment of minorities. It has become imperative to understand the underlying causes of Seaver campus discriminatory behavior in order to prevent it.

There are many encompassing factors that could impact the treatment of outgroups on the Seaver College campus. Part of what makes Seaver College unique from other campuses nationwide is its emphasis on spirituality, including the requirements of three religion classes and attendance of fourteen spiritual events a semester (U.S. News and World Report). This study explores if an upbringing lacking in diversity, or exposure to different ways of thinking, could lead to higher levels of anxiety/uncertainty toward outgroups.

RQ1: What is the effect of exposure to Christian culture on anxiety levels when in contact with outgroups?

The current study will use quantitative survey methodology to explore how levels of social anxiety, amount of self-disclosure, and time spent in predominantly Christian communities affect impressions of outgroup members for White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant (WASP) Pepperdine students.

Review of Literature

Causes of discrimination from students at Pepperdine could be linked to intergroup bias. Intergroup bias can be defined as the “systematic tendency to evaluate one’s own membership group (the ingroup) or its members more favorably than a nonmembership group (the outgroup) or its members,” (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002, p. 576). Applied to Pepperdine students, an outgroup could be anything beyond the realm of WASP — including, but not exhaustive: different ethnicities, religious beliefs, and sexual orientations. Evaluating outgroups is mainly driven by the uncertainty reduction theory, which evaluates the motivation to reduce uncertainty via communication or behavior in an uncertain environment (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

Higher familiarity with outgroups (via direct and indirect friendship with outgroup members) has been shown to reduce anxiety and prejudice (Paolini, Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, 2004). This understanding of outgroups suggests that the uncertainty reduction theory is at play in situations of discrimination. The uncertainty reduction theory posits that individuals are motivated to reduce uncertainty with strangers in order to avoid unpredictability (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 535). Additionally, the higher the uncertainty, the lower the positive expectations and quality of communication an individual can have with someone new (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 535). These lower expectations are a result of the anxiety associated with the interaction. Thus, a low familiarity with outgroups will maintain anxiety levels.

Uncertainty, within the context of uncertainty reduction theory, can be defined as “the feeling of discomfort or awkwardness when two strangers...try to relate to each other” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 535). More applicable to ingroup/outgroup interactions is social anxiety, or the fear of interaction with other people that leads to avoidance (Richard). The researchers therefore speculate that the more fear associated with an impression of an outgroup member, the higher the social anxiety and thereby avoidance. Avoidance perpetuates undue discrimination because anxiety and uncertainty cannot decrease without more intergroup encounters (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 535). The implications of this phenomenon occurring on Pepperdine campus generate the first hypothesis.

H1: There is a positive correlation between levels of social anxiety in a young adult and their negative impression of outgroups.

A further reduction catalyst of prejudice and anxiety is self-disclosure (Turner, Hewstone, Voci, 2007). Self-disclosure describes the expression of breadth (amount of information) and depth (intimacy of information) between two individuals (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Altman and Taylor introduced social penetration theory, which describes how self-disclosure is linked to current and future rewards (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). In other words, exchanging personal information is an indicator of desire to continue the relationship. In fact, higher amounts of self-disclosure may stimulate positive impressions of the speaker and strengthen a relationship (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Therefore, research has supported that the less social distance, which accompanies higher self-disclosure, can be shown to reduce negative attitudes toward outgroups (Bastian, Lusher, & Ata, 2012). The current study will discover whether or not social anxiety and the breadth of self-disclosure are related.

H2: There is a negative correlation between levels of social anxiety in a young adult and the amount of self-disclosure.

However, the researchers speculate that there is more to outgroup impression development than social anxiety and self-disclosure. A possible component in development of discrimination toward outgroups is an individual's environment. If an individual has been exposed to diversity, or may know a member of an outgroup directly or indirectly, research has shown weaker prejudice toward the outgroup (Paolini et al, 2004). This relationship has implications for diverse communities being less prejudiced. Living in a homogenous community, therefore, could suggest higher prejudice for outgroups. In a study demonstrating that brain activity can display prejudice, researchers concluded that "people high in prejudice do not intuitively grasp outgroup members intentions and actions" (Gutsell & Inzlicht, 2010, p. 844). The snowballing effects of uncertainty result in members of ingroups staying within their comfort zones to the point of not understanding an outgroup member perspective. Individuals prone to uncertainty benefit the most from intergroup contact as it reduces intergroup anxiety (Dhont, Roets, & Van Hiel, 2011). Therefore, anxious individuals who remain within their ingroup do not receive the benefits of reducing intergroup anxiety.

For the purposes of this study, the researchers will define the variable of frequency of interactions with predominantly WASP communities as the amount of time and the degree of saturation with which one has spent in such a community.

H3: There is a positive correlation between frequency of interactions with predominantly WASP communities and levels of social anxiety.

A key motivation for uncertainty reduction involves the expectation of future interaction (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 535). Therefore, if an individual does not anticipate future interaction, it is unlikely they will try to reduce uncertainty with a member of an outgroup. This perpetuates not only intergroup bias but also ignorance toward outgroups. The more time spent in a consistently homogenous environment without expecting interactions with outgroups can form certain perceptions of outgroup members. The researchers have thus predicted the fourth hypothesis.

H4: There is a relationship between time spent in predominantly WASP communities and young adult outgroup impressions.

Research has shown that factors such as attachment style and previous experience with outgroups influence outgroup impression (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2001; Dhont et al, 2011). The current researchers speculate that possible other factors, such as parent political background or socioeconomic status, could also have an effect on outgroup impression. These factors will be studied in correlation with outgroup impression in response to the second research question.

RQ2: What other personal participant factors influence outgroup impression?

Method

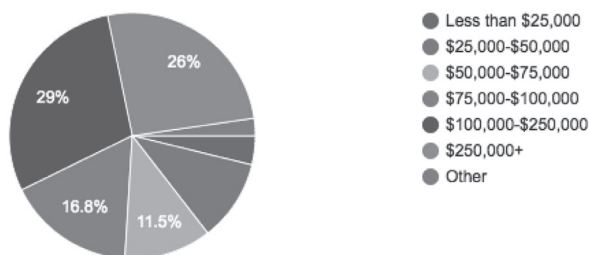
Participants

Participants came from an array of backgrounds. 23.5% of participants did not attend Pepperdine University. Age of participants ranged from 17 to 23 years old, with the majority of responses being 20 years old. 70.2% of participants stated their sex as female. Only eight respondents listed a country of origin being somewhere beyond The United States of America. Countries that weren't The United States of America included Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala, India, Mexico, Singapore, Canada, and Japan, with only one participant per country mentioned. Despite the generally homogenous country of origin, 57.6% of participants mentioned that they've lived abroad.

Further demographic information was gathered about participant background. 79.5% of participants' parents were listed as Christian, while 74.2% of participants said they personally were Christian. The majority of participants (63.4%) attended public versus private school. 54% of participants listed their family income as over \$100,000. See Figure 1 for the holistic pie chart of family income.

Figure 1

Family income: (131 responses)



The study included 138 responses to the survey. Responses were thrown out for inconsistencies in responses or clearly inaccurate responses. For example, one participant listed their country of origin as "Atlantis." The other participant responses that were removed from data evaluation answered with too much variation to be considered valuable for data. In total, six participant responses were removed (N=132). Dr. Lauren Amaro, a communication professor at Pepperdine University, approved the concept, hypotheses, and survey before data was collected.

Measures

Every scale mentioned was compiled into the overall survey. To abbreviate the survey, items were chosen that were most applicable to the current study (see Appendix). All items for variables, other than demographic, were designed with Likert-type responses, where participants answered from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (6).

Social Anxiety. Social anxiety was measured using an interaction anxiety scale and a social anxiety in university students scale (Leary, 2013; Bhamani, 2013). The interaction anxiousness scale included items such as "I usually feel relaxed around other people, even people who are quite different from me," (Leary, 2013). A sample item of the social anxiety in university students scale includes, "I feel comfortable being introduced to new people," or "I feel comfortable to make friends with people who don't dress like me," (Bhamani, 2013).

Amount of Self-Disclosure. In order to measure quantity of self-disclosure, the researchers developed an original scale consisting of four Likert-style questions including questions such as, "I often discuss personal matters with friends," and "I do not feel comfortable sharing my personal matters." The four questions were written with the goal of measuring a participant's self-disclosure attitudes and patterns.

Negative Impression of Outgroups. Negative impression of outgroups was measured using a variety of scales, ranging from an ethnocentrism scale, PRECA scale, homophobia scale, and a religious fundamentalism scale. These scales were chosen to be used in the survey because they test the most common issues of negative impressions of outgroups at Seaver College.

The ethnocentrism scale studies participant ability to comprehend beyond their culture (Neuliep & McCroskey, 2013). An example of an item the researchers will be using in the current study is "My culture should be the role model for other cultures," (Neuliep & McCroskey, 2013). The survey included four items from the ethnocentrism scale. The Personal Report of Interethnic Communication Apprehension (PRECA) scale includes items such as "I am afraid to speak up in conversations with a person from a different ethnic/racial group," with participant answers ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997). The homophobia scale has items such as "I avoid gay individuals," ultimately testing tolerance (Wright, Adams, & Bernat, 1999).

Procedures

The researchers used a convenient sampling technique. The survey was posted on the three researchers' Facebook profiles with a post asking for participation. Researchers also posted on class group Facebook pages, such as the class of 2019 and sorority or fraternity pages. Criteria required to take the survey included the participant being a university student. Participants clicked on the Google Forms link provided and filled out the survey (see Appendix).

Finally, the religious fundamentalism scale includes items such as “It is more important to be a good person than to believe in God and the right religion,” where a participant would also indicate how much they agree (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004).

Frequency of Interactions with Predominantly WASP Individuals. In order to measure the frequency of interactions with predominantly WASP communities, the researchers developed their own scale consisting of four Likert-style questions such as “I attended church regularly while living in my parent’s home,” and “the majority of my ‘circle’ (family and friends) are Christian.”

Results

H1 predicted that there would be a positive correlation between levels of social anxiety and negative impressions of outgroups. To test the hypotheses and RQ1, the researchers conducted a Pearson product moment correlational analysis. The correlational testing resulted in a non-significant slight positive association ($r=.14$, $p=.11$). The hypothesis was not supported. The data does not suggest that as levels of social anxiety increases, so does negative impressions of outgroups.

H2 suggested there was a negative correlation between levels of social anxiety in a young adult and the amount of self-disclosure. Again, correlational testing resulted in a significant positive correlation ($r=.42$, $p<0.05$). The p -value represents a 95% likelihood that the findings were not found by chance. H2 was both supported and not; while the projected direction was incorrect, a significant correlation was found between the variables. The results suggest that as levels of social anxiety increases, amount of self-disclosure also increases.

H3 theorized that there was a positive correlation between the frequency of interactions with predominantly WASP communities and levels of social anxiety. The correlational results produced a very slight negative correlation, but the p -value was not significant ($r= -0.04$, $p= 0.65$). The relationship predicted in H3 was not supported. The data actually suggests an opposite directional relationship, whereas frequency of interactions with predominantly WASP communities increases, levels of social anxiety decreases.

H4 predicted that there was a relationship between time spent in predominantly WASP communities and young adult negative outgroup impressions. The results proved significant, ultimately eliciting a positive correlation ($r=0.55$, $p<0.00001$). The data suggests that the more time spent in predominantly WASP communities is directly associated with young adult negative outgroup impressions. There were particularly diverse responses to items testing the participant’s religious fundamentalism, as seen in the distribution of responses in Figure 2.

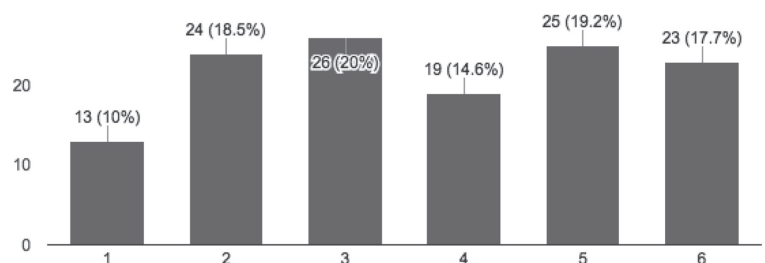
RQ1 asked what the effect of exposure to Christian culture had on anxiety levels when in contact with outgroups. The relationship between anxiety and negative impression of outgroups was not significant ($r=0.14$). There was also an insignificant relationship between interactions with WASP communities and levels of social anxiety. Therefore, based on the results of this study, there is no quantified effect of exposure to Christian culture on anxiety levels when in contact with outgroups.

RQ2 asked what personal participant factors influence outgroup impression. To test to see if demographics had an effect on outgroup impression, the researchers ran mean differences tests. There were no significant differences on outgroup impressions between Christian parents ($M=2.34$; $SD=1.93$). Additionally, there were no significant differences on outgroup impressions for if the participant was Christian or not ($M=1.34$; $SD=0.35$), or the age ($M=2.25$), or sex ($M=2.35$) of the participant. Living abroad ($M=2.35$) and country of origin ($M=2.33$) were also not significant. Furthermore,

Figure 2

The fundamentals of God's religion should never be tampered with, or compromised with others' beliefs.

(130 responses)



year at Pepperdine ($M=2.48$; $SD=0.74$), public/private school ($M=2.36$), and family income ($M=1.73$, $SD=0.6$) all did not show significant influence on outgroup impression in this study.

The averages between university students that do attend and do not attend Pepperdine were also compared to see if there was any significance. Pepperdine students showed higher negative impression of outgroups ($M=2.75$), lower self-disclosure ($M=1.63$), and higher religious fundamentalism ($M=5.13$) than non-Pepperdine university students. The differences between the other averages were not significant.

Discussion

Recent events on Pepperdine's campus illustrated various levels of discrimination. Based off of research on intergroup bias and the uncertainty reduction theory, the researchers hypothesized that there would be a relationship between Pepperdine's homogenous environment and negative impression of outgroups. The social anxiety some students may feel in general interacting with outgroups because of unfamiliarity, and ultimate levels of self-disclosure, were also taken into consideration. Therefore, the research studied the level of diversity that participants had experienced and whether or not that influenced their outgroup perception and anxiety levels.

The results showed that there was not an effect of exposure to Christian culture on anxiety levels when in contact with outgroups, at least as far as the variables studied in this sample. This suggests that it's not necessarily the WASP communities themselves that could lead to negative outgroup impression, but could depend more on significant experiences shaping impressions. As seen in the array of responses to the religious fundamentalism items, the participant's religious ideologies appeared to be diverse and also cannot be attributed to negative outgroup impression because they were not tested.

Both H1 and H3 had too slight of correlations in order to make significant statements about the student body as a whole. With H2 having an opposite directional relationship than hypothesized, it becomes clear that anxiety doesn't have as big of a role in the outgroup conversation as proposed. The variables of social anxiety and outgroup impressions could be only inadvertently related, as seen with the significant positive correlation in H2. Additionally, while H3 had a positive correlation, it was too weak to presume that levels of social anxiety change in particularly WASP communities.

The most significant results were seen in H4, which was the main undercurrent throughout the study. Being surrounded by homogenous people, such as spending time in predominantly WASP communities, was indeed significantly related to negative young adult outgroup impressions. This is supported by the uncertainty reduction theory. If an individual primarily spends time in WASP communities, there is no anticipation of future interaction with outgroups, and thereby the avoidance of trying to understand an outgroup individual personally (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 535).

Due to the insignificance of every demographic factor studied in relation to participant negative impression of outgroups, a response to RQ2 is that no personal factor studied had an influence. In particular, parent/participant Christianity, age, sex, year at Pepperdine, country of origin, public/private school, and family income did not influence participant's impressions of outgroups in this study.

The differences in responses between non-Pepperdine university students and Pepperdine students were striking. Pepperdine students had higher responses for religious fundamentalism and negative impression of outgroups. Furthermore, Pepperdine students had a significantly lower level of self-disclosure. These differences do not necessarily reflect the university and could be attributed to certain types of students being drawn to particular universities. However, this study does show an association of Pepperdine students with negative impressions of outgroups while the non-Pepperdine students do not.

Limitations

There were a few limitations within this study. The most poignant limitation was through the convenient sampling method: each participant was a friend on Facebook, indirectly or not, with a researcher. The opinions and lifestyles of the researchers would be reflected in the participant responses due to basic acquaintanceship or

developed real-life friendships. Researchers setting out to study negative outgroup impressions had an awareness of the circumstances, making it likely that the researchers' Facebook friends would also hold the same beliefs. As a result, social desirability bias could also have played a role in this research. Participants' wanting to respond with what is socially acceptable could influence some of the items, such as the items asking about church attendance or homosexuality.

Furthermore, the researchers neglected to include an item asking for the participant's ethnicity. While this does not necessarily affect participants' exposure to WASP communities, it limits any generalizations that can be made about whether or not ethnicity contributes to negative impressions of outgroups. Ideally, the sample of Pepperdine students would've been representative of the Seaver college student body (Admission Fast Facts). This would entail a sample of 60% female and 40% male. Regarding ethnicity, 48.2% will be white, 15% Latino, 11% Asian, and 5% African American. The respondents ended up being around 70% female, which is including students that do not attend Pepperdine. As previously mentioned, ethnicity information was not gathered and conclusions cannot be drawn. Additionally, there was not an even amount of non-Pepperdine university students and Pepperdine university students. More meaningful differences in those averages could've been collected if the sample was more even. In general, results (and thereby the correlations) would be more solidified with a larger sample. Overarching the entire study is the inexperience of the researchers. The data was gathered by novice researchers and could've been accomplished more expertly with trained researchers.

Conclusions and Future Study

Future studies could explore other predominantly WASP universities or communities to see if there can be similar results. Additionally, a longitudinal study that measures for exposure to outgroups throughout the lifespan could test to see if impression of outgroups can change with an increase or stagnation of diverse experiences. While attachment style and previous experience with outgroups has been researched to influence outgroup impression (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2001; Dhont et al, 2011), different personal factors should also be explored.

Overall, this study has supported that the dynamics of intergroup bias at Pepperdine University could contribute to the negative impression of student outgroups. Anxiety and self-disclosure were not significantly associated with this issue in the study.

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Appendix

University Student Attitudes

1. My parent/guardians are Christian: Yes/No
2. I identify as a Christian: Yes/No
3. Age: _____
4. Sex: F/M
5. Year at Pepperdine: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5+, I do not attend Pepperdine University
6. Country of origin: _____
7. Have you lived abroad? Yes/No
8. Did you attend public or private school? Public/Private
9. Family income: less than \$25,000, \$25,000-\$50,000, \$50,000-\$75,000, \$75,000-\$100,000, \$100,000-\$250,000, \$250,000+

Likert-style responses of choosing between numbers 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree):

10. I usually feel comfortable when I'm in a group of people I don't know.
11. People in my culture could learn a lot from people in other cultures.
12. I feel comfortable being introduced to new people.
13. I only have friends of the same sex.
14. I am afraid to speak up in conversations with a person from a different ethnic/racial group.
15. I feel comfortable to make friends with people who don't dress like me.

16. I usually feel relaxed around other people, even people who are quite different from me.
17. Communicating with people from difference ethnic/racial groups makes me feel uncomfortable.
18. I have many friends with different cultures.
19. I attended church regularly and/or was regularly involved in a youth group/bible/study/prayer group/YoungLife type of program while living in my parent/guardian's home.
20. Most other cultures are backward compared to my culture.
21. I attended Christian affiliated schools for the majority of my K-12 education.
22. I like to get involved in group discussion with others who are from different ethnic/racial groups.
23. The majority of my "circle" (friends and family) are Christian.
24. I have no fear of speaking up in a conversation with a person from a different ethnic/racial group.
25. I often discuss personal matters with friends.
26. I am currently an active member of a congregation/youth group (not including small group convocation programs).
27. I do not feel comfortable sharing my personal matters.
28. My culture should be the role model for other cultures.
29. I consider myself to be an "open book."
30. I feel comfortable sharing my feelings with friends.
31. I avoid gay individuals.
32. Homosexuality is immoral.
33. If I discovered a friend was gay I would end the friendship.
34. It does not bother me to see two homosexual people together in public.
35. God has given humanity a complete, unfailing guide to happiness and salvation, which must be totally followed.
36. It is more important to be a good person than to believe in God and the right religion.
37. All of the religions in the world have flaws and wrong teachings. There is no perfectly true, right religion.
38. The fundamentals of God's religion should never be tampered with, or compromised with others' beliefs. PJ
RC

DIVERSITY IN...

Geography



Studying Abroad and Willingness to Relocate Overseas

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Pepperdine University

Assigned in COM 300: Introduction to Communication Research (Dr. Charles Choi)

Abstract

This paper will examine if students who have a positive experience studying abroad are more likely to relocate overseas in the future. Using Integrative Communication Theory we hope to explore full assimilation or integration into a new culture through the application of this theory's stress-adaptation-growth cycle. Moreover, we seek to explore how the following variables are correlated both with each other, and with a student's willingness to relocate abroad in the future: integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and the intercultural competencies of ethnorelativism and intercultural adaptability. Based on combination of prior research on this topic and the aforementioned variables as well as a survey we administered to Pepperdine students who studied abroad, we hope to find a positive correlation between these variables and a student's willingness to relocate overseas in the future.

Keywords: integrative communication theory, integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, intercultural competencies, ethnorelativism, intercultural adaptability

Introduction

In today's world of globalization, individuals are increasingly exposed to various cultures of the world. Through the development of global transportations and media communications, differences between regions of the world are bridged. Individuals are able to travel for leisure, seize international job opportunities, and migrate to new countries in pursuit of better lives. Across university institutions, study abroad offerings and exchange programs are increasing, enabling college students to immerse themselves across foreign cultures. As students study abroad, they must adapt to the local culture and negotiate their newfound cultural identity. In positive cases of adaptation, individuals engage in integration, a process in which both the host culture and the culture of origin are merged together. In turn, as individuals attain a greater sense of belonging through integration, this can lead to a greater "intercultural willingness to communicate" when the opportunity arises. Additionally, it may also lead to a greater level of intercultural competence as individuals attain an ethnorelativist point of view that makes them more sensitive to different cultures, as well as an intercultural adaptability to their surroundings. These topics are worthy of analysis as citizens of the world are more mobile than before. As a result of their mobility, they are not only able to travel but also live abroad for long periods of time. Hence, it is crucial to understand the factors that lead to an increase in willingness to live overseas.

This study will first explore the practices that lead to a positive integration experience through the application of the stress-adaptation-growth cycle (Integrative Communication Theory). Second, it will outline the factors that lead to intercultural willingness to communicate. Third, this study will explain the levels of intercultural competencies through the scope of intercultural adaptability and ethnorelativism. Lastly, it will examine the effects of positive integration on intercultural willingness to communicate and intercultural competencies, which in turn, might increase the likelihood of individuals relocating overseas.

Review of Literature

Integrative Communication Theory

Young Yun Kim's (2006) integrative communication and cross cultural adaptation theory views a human as a system which goes through a process of unlearning its original identity as it moves into a new and culturally unfamiliar environment. In other words, Kim argues that people have to first lose the characteristics of their original cultural identity, such as language, customs, and values, in order to become fully assimilated into the new culture. Furthermore, the theory explores three aspects of intercultural adaptation: functional fitness, psychological health, and intercultural identity. Functional fitness is an individual's capability to fulfill the needs within the society, and it is developed by having communication competence (Harvey, 2007, p.4). A higher degree of functional fitness is achieved when individuals know how to behave appropriately within the new culture and effectively live within that culture. Next, the psychological health aspect relates to a person's ability to communicate in a new culture. This is generally reflected in a person's increased sense of personal well-being and satisfaction in the new culture, and is closely linked to overcoming stress (Kim, 2009). When individuals no longer experience the emotional and mental trauma associated with transitional stress, their psychological health is no longer a concern. Lastly, the development of intercultural identity is the feeling of belonging to neither one's own culture nor another new society, but being part of multiple cultural groups. During this adaptation process, newcomers try to assimilate into the host culture by unlearning their original cultural identity. At the same time, an individual's original identity will begin to lose some of its rigidity and distinctiveness. In other words, intercultural identity integrates both home and host cultures.

Acculturation: Integration

When exposed to a new culture, individuals go through the process of acculturation, a cultural and psychological change that results from a meeting of two cultures (Sam & Berry, 2010). Berry (1997) proposes four patterns of acculturation: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Out of these four, integration proves to be the most preferable. This is because individuals are able to maintain some degree of cultural integrity while having active involvement in the local culture (Sam et al., 2010). In the other outcomes, individuals fail to attain a blend of cultures as they reject one culture or the other. Thus, during integration, the individual develops a hybrid identity, which is a healthy mix of local and global identity (Sam et al., 2010). Jensen & Arnett (2012) assert that this response is a form of biculturalism — an internalized blend of two cultures. In turn, this combination of cultures will lead to new concepts and practices (Jensen et al., 2012).

Identity Stress and Adaptation. As an individual encounters an unfamiliar cultural environment, he or she goes through three stages of transition—stress, adaptation, and growth (Tian & Lowe, 2014). As individuals go through countless shifts in lifestyle and habits, they experience stress arising from the structure of the foreign environment (Tian et al., 2014). Acculturative stresses, which can be in the forms of psychological and socio-cultural stresses, are manifested through anxiety and uncertainty (Sam et al., 2010). Students who experienced these stresses when they studied abroad spoke of their transition as disappointing and disorienting (Ruddock & De Sales, 2007). As a dynamic and cyclical process, stress only persists until the individual is able to achieve a satisfactory adaptation (Kim, 2008). Thus, it is ultimately the determination of an individual to integrate him or herself into a new culture that will help him or her proceed to the stage of adaptation (Tian et al., 2014).

The next stage of the transition is adaptation, which can be seen through the cognitive, affective, and aesthetic strands of identity development (Tian et al., 2014). Cognitively, individuals abroad begin to discover more about the culture as they start to develop a reciprocal relationship with the environment (Tian et al., 2014). In the affective strand of identity development, individuals begin to grow accustomed to the culture of the host country by finding commonalities with the locals. Increased interactions between students and teachers serve as bridges between cultural barriers, by helping students move toward a more “universalized” cultural identity than that of an individualized one. (Tian et al., 2014). Moreover, it helped them develop a sense of achievement and empowerment (Tian et al., 2014). Lastly, in the aesthetic strand of identity development, individuals begin to

interpret their new environment as a positive experience (Tian et al., 2014). Hence, it is seen that engagement and reciprocal communication with the community serve as means to develop social networks as well as a new sense of belonging.

Growth and Reflective Thinking. The last stage of transitioning is growth, which is the emergence of a well-negotiated intercultural identity. This stage largely involves reflective and reflexive thinking as it enables students to learn from their cross-cultural transition (Witkin, 1999). Through reflective thinking, individuals are able to adopt a third party perspective, distancing themselves from previous cultural biases and enabling them to reflect upon what they had once taken for granted (Witkin, 1999). Moreover, at the end of their study abroad programs, students were seen to have undergone a cultural identity shift to a more open-ended and empathetic identity (Tian et al., 2014).

Additionally, reflective thinking enabled individuals abroad to grow in their self-awareness. This is an indication of cultural identity change as individuals were able to become more aware of their values, while realizing the need to accept other values (Ruddock et al., 2007). Thus, it is evident that integrated individuals become less egocentric as they develop a “capacity of critical examination” (Tian et al., 2014). The experience abroad, which could be seen as a disruption to their cultural routine, enables individuals to view life through a different lens, serving as a critical stage in one’s cultural development (Curran, 2007).

Intercultural Willingness to Communicate

Intercultural willingness to communicate (IWTC) is defined as the probability of initiating communication when the opportunity arises (MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Donovan, 2003). With increased IWTC, a second language learner will not only develop greater second language skills, but also increased cultural interest. One of the most prominent ways that IWTC is studied is by comparing students studying a second language. When the immersion students return, they are more willing to communicate in the second language compared to the group that stayed home. The students who experienced content-based learning abroad had an advantage in developing international posture and an increased desire of second language communication compared to the students who stayed at home (Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008).

Intercultural willingness to communicate does not develop in a vacuum, rather there are several factors that might influence an individual’s willingness to communicate with individuals of other cultures. One such factor is an individual’s personality type. For example, introverted people tend to have high anxiety in social situations, thus they may find conversation with foreigners less enjoyable (Lu & Hsu, 2008). More than simply introversion and extroversion, students from different countries will have different communication traits specific to their own culture, that in turn may affect their willingness to communicate. For example, the average Japanese student is more introverted than the average American student, and as such, their willingness to communicate might be affected. These personality and cultural norms can affect their frequency of conversations in the second language (MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, & Noels, 1998). Intercultural willingness to communicate is also influenced by an individual’s worldview and degree of cultural acceptance. For instance, individuals who harbor strong ethnocentrism, and only view the world from their culture’s point of view, are less willing to communicate, as they see those conversations as not worthwhile (MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, & Noels, 1998). Conversely, students who are interested in international affairs and activities seem to be more willing to communicate (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, Shimizu, 2004). This is supported by the fact that the higher the desire that second language learners hold about learning cultural values, and language skills, the more likely they are to communicate with the local people (Yu-Lu & Chia-Fang, 2008). In their entirety, students who study abroad are more likely to develop a greater interest in other cultures, and be more open to the “other.”

Intercultural Competencies

Intercultural competence, according to Deardorff (2006, p. 249), is the “ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes.” Intercultural competencies are divided into ethnorelativism and intercultural adaptability (Ting-Toomey, 1999). In

this study, intercultural sensitivity will be equated with ethnorelativism, the “ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences,” (Hammer, Bennett, Wiseman, p. 422). Intercultural sensitivity is ultimately arrived at when the individual comes to the ethnorelativist point of view and acknowledges the validity of all cultures. Intercultural adaptability refers to the ability to shift one’s cultural perspective and change their behavior accordingly (Hammer, 2012).

Intercultural Competency: Ethnorelativism. Ethnorelativism refers to a view of the world from the perspectives of multiple cultures, which in turn, gives individuals greater intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993). The ethnorelative stages to arrive at heightened intercultural sensitivity consist of acceptance, adaptation, and integration (Bennett, 1993). Acceptance and adaptation, also part of the ethnorelativist point of view, refer to the point where the individual can experience (and accept) the worldviews of multiple cultures, which in turn, affects their cognitive and behavioral processes (Hammer, Bennett, Wiseman, 2003). Integration, also termed the “reversal factor” or “cultural marginality,” is when the individuals “construe their identities at the margins of two or more cultures and central to none” (Hammer, Bennett, Wiseman, 2003, p. 425). In Williams’ (2005) study of students who spent a semester long study abroad in a foreign country, compared to students who stayed on campus for the semester, students who studied abroad demonstrated greater ethnorelativism than did students who stayed on campus for the semester. Williams’ (2005) study revealed that students studying abroad enhanced their ethnorelativist point of view and as such, their intercultural sensitivity, regardless of whether or not these students had studied abroad in the past. Exposure to these other cultures, as measured by their number of friends, romantic relationships with individuals of another culture, and languages studied were the greatest predictor of ethnorelativism within this group (Williams, 2005). Williams’ finding is corroborated by a study examining short-term study abroad, defined as 12 weeks, in Salamanca, Spain (Bloom & Miranda, 2015). Both studies showed that ethnorelativism does indeed increase for students studying abroad, a sentiment further corroborated by studies of intercultural adaptability.

Intercultural Competency: Intercultural Adaptability. Similar to Williams’ (2005) finding on student’s ethnorelativist points of view, it was also found that their intercultural adaptability, while studying abroad for a semester, increased compared to students who stayed on campus who remained unchanged in their intercultural adaptability. Adaptability in this context is defined as the student’s ability to adjust to each other’s behaviors “appropriately and flexibly” (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Adaptability, as measured by the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) is measured in terms of emotional resilience, flexibility and openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy (Kelly & Meyers, 1995). Using this scale, it was found that students who studied abroad had greater intercultural adaptability than those staying on-campus for the semester (Williams, 2005). However, similar to the findings on ethnorelativism discovered by both Williams and Bloom and Miranda, intercultural adaptability and intercultural competence, as a whole, are strengthened when students not only immerse themselves in the culture but critically view their place in this culture by reflecting on their experiences and the meaning they extrapolate from these experiences abroad through journals, group discussions, and dialogue with host and international students (Hammer, 2012). Through such reflection, students will be able to assess their willingness to interact with these individuals, which in turn, enables these competencies to come to fruition (Hammer, 2012).

As a result of studying abroad increasing the development of these competencies, career directions of individuals who have participated in these abroad programs with their colleges or universities are influenced (Gillespie & Norris, 2009). Gillespie and Norris (2009) found that 48% of individuals they had surveyed who had studied abroad had worked or volunteered in an international capacity since college, which might have included (at least temporarily) relocation overseas. Moreover, the competencies acquired while studying abroad may have also been integral in influencing future study abroad experiences. The individuals surveyed by Gillespie and Norris (2009) were twice as likely to study abroad in the future, which might be attributed to the effect of study abroad on their intercultural competencies of ethnorelativism and intercultural adaptability, that makes such a decision plausible.

Rational and Hypotheses

While adjusting to new cultures and learning new feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, individuals will undergo a path of gradual and unconscious personal transformation. According to Kim's cross-cultural adaptation theory, intercultural transformation is the "progression of internal change" (Kim, 2009). In fact, reflective thinking enables individuals to adopt a third party perspective, distancing themselves from previous cultural biases. This ultimately exemplifies how integration leads to a formation of a new intercultural identity proposed by Kim. Moreover, researchers have found that integrated individuals will become more self-aware of their values, and less egocentric as they develop a "capacity of critical examination (Tian et al., 2014).

Individuals also go through a time of stress and disruption, questioning their worldviews, norms, and values when experiencing a new culture. Interestingly, Kim's stress-adaptation-growth model views stress as a "trigger of intercultural growth and transformation" (Liu & Gallois, 2014). Kim believes that stress is the stepping-stone to individual change and growth. Thus, the stress-adaptation-growth model emphasizes the idea that, when in the face of unexpected and new environments, individuals respond to the unfamiliar situations by reorganizing themselves and developing adaptive changes.

As a result of sufficient acculturation and integration into a particular culture while studying abroad, students are equipped with the intercultural growth that makes intercultural competencies and intercultural willingness to communicate (IWTC) possible. Overall, studying abroad leads to heightened intercultural competencies that result from an IWTC. Ethnorelativism and intercultural adaptability, defined as the flexibility of adjusting to another culture's behavior, are heightened when students study abroad (Williams, 2005). The growth in these competencies of intercultural adaptability and an ethnocentric point of view hinges on one's IWTC and degree of immersion within the culture (Williams, 2005). IWTC, or the probability of initiating communication when the opportunity arises, allows for the exposure that heightens student's intercultural competencies, and as such, the longer the students are immersed, the more willing they are to communicate with the country's residents, in their native language if applicable, and gain these competencies (Lu & Hsu, 2008). The increased intercultural interest that results from IWTC helps to facilitate intercultural competencies and shed the ethnocentrism that inhibits the development of ethnocentrism and intercultural adaptability (MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, & Noels, 1998). Considering this research, we hypothesize the following:

H1: Integration into a foreign culture overseas will result in heightened Intercultural Willingness to Communicate.

H2: Moreover, this integration will further result in heightened intercultural competencies, defined as intercultural adaptability and ethnocentrism.

H3: The combination of sufficient integration into a foreign culture, heightened intercultural competencies and an intercultural willingness to communicate will increase the likelihood of students relocating abroad in the future.

Methods

Population Sample

For the purpose of this study, we will be collecting survey responses from individuals who participated in a Pepperdine study abroad program for a semester or a year and those who did not. Our sample population age is persons aged between 18 and 22. The sample will be distributed in a way that students with a variety of majors will participate and represent their discipline.

Sample Plan

Our sample will be collected using convenience and snowball sampling through distributing the sample digitally via Google Forms to fellow students, who may then redistribute the survey to others in our target population via social media (i.e., Facebook). We hope to obtain a minimum of 100 responses.

Survey Instrumentation

We will use a Likert Scale to measure responses on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is correlated to a particular variable depending on the question (i.e. very unlikely, strongly disagree) and 5 is correlated to another variable depending on the question (i.e. very likely, strongly agree). In order to measure intercultural willingness to communicate we will be using variations of statements based on the Willingness to Communicate Scale as well as the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to measure the intercultural competencies. Moreover, to measure positive study abroad experiences and degree of integration we will be using variations of statements based on the American Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (AAMAS). Questions will account for and be organized by the following variables in our study: positive integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and the intercultural competencies of intercultural sensitivity and adaptability (See Appendix B for questionnaire).

Timeline

The survey will be electronically distributed on November 9th, all data will be collected by November 28th, and data will be analyzed on November 30th.

Example Questions

- What is your preferred gender? (Male, Female, Other)
- Did you participate in a Pepperdine Study Abroad Program for a semester or year? (Yes, No) If so, which one? (England, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, China, Argentina).
- On a scale of 1-5 (one being never and five being very often) how often did you speak with locals in your country?

Results

Our survey received a total of 128 responses. Due to the lack of cultural change, we discarded the three responses from students of the Washington DC program. In terms of demographics, there were significantly more females (71.1%) than males (26.6%). Furthermore, as we used a fill in the blank question to ask about ethnicity, we received a large variation of ethnicities and mixed ethnicities. Therefore, we chose not to calculate correlations specific to demographical characteristics.

We calculated the average score of each variable: Integration, Cultural Competence, and Intercultural Willingness to Communicate. Then, we ran correlations between these variables: 1. Integration and cultural competence 2. Integration and intercultural willingness to communicate. This score was calculated based on the 5-point Likert scale that was used throughout our questionnaire. Furthermore, as the goal of our study was to measure the increased likelihood of relocating, we calculated the correlation between the three variables and the answer to our relocation question. Pepperdine students averaged a score of 3.5 in integration, 4.3 in cultural competence, and 3.7 in intercultural willingness to communicate. Furthermore, for our question on the likelihood of future relocation, we received a fairly distributed response with an average of 3.0.

In terms of the relationship between variables, we found a 0.22 correlation between integration and intercultural competence. On the other hand, we found a 0.18 correlation between integration and intercultural willingness to communicate. Lastly, for the relationship between integration, intercultural competence, and intercultural willingness to communicate with the likelihood to relocate, we found a correlation of 0.26, 0.22, and 0.33, respectively.

Discussion

The results of our study show a positive correlation for each one of our three hypotheses. For our first hypothesis, that integration will lead to intercultural willingness to communicate, we found that integration is positively correlated with an intercultural willingness to communicate with a correlation of .22. Further, our

second hypothesis, that integration leads to greater intercultural competencies is supported with a correlation of .18. Our last hypothesis, that greater integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and intercultural competence leads to a greater willingness to communicate also yields a positive correlation; integration and relocation has a correlation of .26, intercultural willingness to communicate and relocation has a correlation of .33, and competencies and relocation has a correlation of .21. Thus, although the data supports each of our hypotheses, and our main hypothesis, that the culmination of all these different variables: integration, intercultural competencies and intercultural willingness to communicate, will lead to a greater willingness to relocate abroad, we expected there to be a higher correlation than our results yielded. The results of our research relate indirectly to the previous research cited in our literature review, that is, that integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and intercultural competencies are heightened as a result of studying abroad, and as such, might influence student's willingness to move abroad and or engage in international experiences in the future. However, the majority of the research that we cited, particularly for intercultural competencies and intercultural willingness to communicate, measured student's gains in these different intercultural skills pre and post sojourn abroad. We framed the questions in the survey in such a way that sufficient integration, adaptation, and a heightened ethno relativist point of view were all products of an intercultural willingness to communicate; integration is a byproduct of the cross-cultural adaptability theory just as an ethno relativist point of view and intercultural adaptability stem from an individual's intercultural willingness to communicate.

Because of the nature of our study, we could only measure student's levels of integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, intercultural competencies, and response to the statement "I am likely to relocate abroad after graduation" after they studied abroad. Had we studied the differences between these variables pre and post studying abroad, we could have compared the results and correlations pre and post sojourn abroad to measure the individual's growth, thus giving us a greater basis for comparison.

One of the major weaknesses in our methodological decision lies in the previously mentioned idea that our survey was not able to measure gains in these different variables of integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and intercultural competencies that might lead to a greater likeliness to moving abroad pre and post sojourn abroad. Due to our short time frame, these differences could not be measured and as such, we could not observe student's gains in these areas pre and post sojourn abroad. Furthermore, because two of our group members studied abroad in Switzerland and Germany, the majority of the responses (27.6% for Switzerland and 23.6% Germany) came from students who studied abroad in these two European countries. Responses may have been different if more respondents who studied abroad in non-European (Argentina) and non-Western (China) cultures participated in the survey.

Another weakness in our study lies in the survey design itself; because this was a self-reported survey, due to the effects of social desirability, the correlation between the variables in our study could have been even lower. Further, we cannot validate the accuracy of the information that we received because of the nature of a survey. That being the case, the most effective and accurate way to measure whether students who study abroad (and make gains in integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and intercultural competencies) are more likely to relocate abroad in the future, is to observe the students post and pre sojourn abroad and turn this study into a longitudinal study where we follow these students overtime and observe their moving patterns.

Additionally, our failure to remove the control group from our data presents another weakness of our study. The control group consisted of individuals who responded "N/A" or "not applicable" to the survey question that asked students to select which study abroad program they participated in. Of the 125 individuals who completed the entire survey, 12 or 9.6% of those who completed the survey selected "N/A." This leads us to believe that the individuals who answered "N/A" may have skewed the results of the survey and that had they been excluded, the correlation would have been higher. Also, there were no students who responded negatively to the survey because the questions were framed for students who had positive study abroad experiences. As a result, the survey only consists of positive responses, with no people choosing low numbers in the responses.

To fix the theoretical design of our research project as a whole more distinct variables needed to be selected. The definitions of our variables and the variables themselves were fairly similar. Integration is closely

bound to intercultural adaptability and intercultural willingness to communicate is both motivated by and a byproduct of an ethnorelativist point of view. In our survey there were subtle differences between the different responses that measured each variable. In the future we could select variables that had more nuanced definitions and were not as closely bound.

Because of the culmination of these weaknesses and our failure to exclude the control group, the results of the study should not be extended or generalized beyond our immediate sample. Similarly, we cannot make causal claims in this research since the survey was limited to Pepperdine students only. Rather, further research needs to be done, which is beyond the scope of our study and the time allotted for it, to thoroughly examine whether students who study abroad are more likely to relocate abroad in the future as a result of their sufficient integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and development of intercultural competencies. This could be accomplished by following a student throughout their life for a designated time frame both before and after they studied abroad in order to see whether significant changes in integration, intercultural willingness to communicate, and development in their intercultural competencies occurred pre and post sojourn abroad.

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Appendix A

Figure 1

What is your preferred gender? (128 responses)

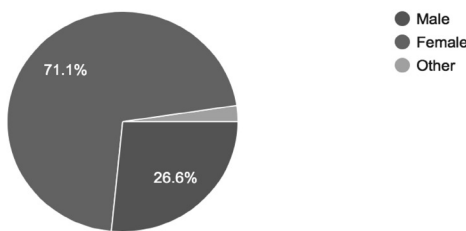


Figure 2

What is your year in school? (128 responses)

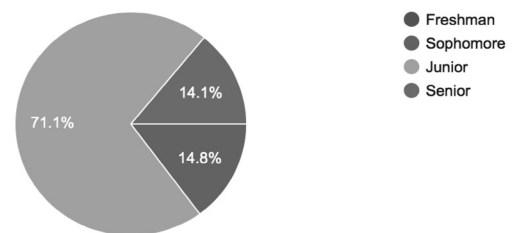


Figure 3

If so, which one? (127 responses)

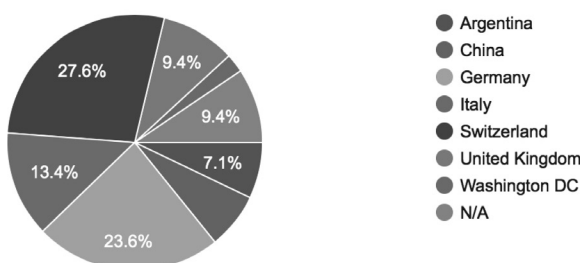
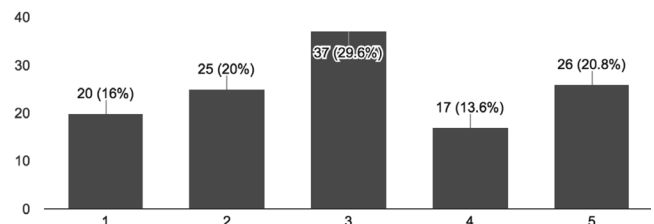


Figure 4

I am likely to relocate abroad after graduation. (125 responses)



Appendix B

Statement: What is this about?

The purpose of this survey is to examine whether students who studied abroad for a semester or year in one of Pepperdine's study abroad programs are more likely to relocate overseas in the future. The survey consists of 28 questions and will take a minimum of about 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey consists of various questions, including demographic questions and statements where you will be asked to evaluate your intercultural adaptability, sensitivity, willingness to communicate, and integration into the particular country when you studied abroad.

Demographic Questions

1. What is your preferred gender? (Male, Female, Other)
2. Year in school? (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)
3. What is your ethnicity? (options, blank)
4. Have you lived outside the US for more than 2 years? (Yes, No)
5. Did you participate in a Pepperdine Study Abroad Program for a semester or year? (Yes, No)
6. If so, which one? (England, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, China, Argentina, Washington DC)

Intercultural Competencies

7. I feel comfortable when communicating with individuals of another culture.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
8. I am able to maintain a positive attitude in an unfamiliar environment.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
9. I am able to both show tolerance towards others who are different from me.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
10. I am able to possess a nonjudgmental attitude towards new experiences.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree

11. I am able to appreciate cultural differences.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
 12. It's OK not to care what happens outside my own country.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
 13. I tend to avoid individuals from other cultures who behave differently than me.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
 14. I tend to focus more on similarities than differences.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
 15. I respect others and their value systems.
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree
- #### Intercultural Willingness to Communicate
16. I take advantage of opportunities to interact with people from different cultures
 - 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 Strongly Agree

17. I become nervous while interacting with people from different cultures.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

18. I am usually excited to talk with people from other cultures.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

19. I approach people from other cultures to engage in conversation, even if I do not know them.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

**NOTE: If you attended more than one International Program, please rate the statements according to the program that you enjoyed the most.*

Integration

Factor 1: Cultural Identity

20. Throughout my time studying abroad, I discovered commonalities with the people of the host country.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

Factor 2: Language

21. My language skills improved throughout my time abroad.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

22. My reading and writing skills improved.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

23. While abroad, I often listened to music or looked at movies and magazines from my abroad country.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

Factor 3: Cultural Knowledge

24. I feel knowledgeable about the culture and traditions of the country where I studied abroad.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

25. I actively pursued knowledge about the history of the country where I studied abroad.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

26. While there, I practiced the unique local traditions and holidays of my abroad country.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

Factor 4: Food Consumption

27. I frequently ate the food of the country where I studied abroad.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree

28. I am likely to relocate abroad after graduation.

1 Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5 Strongly Agree 