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**TELEVISION SEXUAL CONTENT AND ADOLESCENTS IN SPAIN:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE TV SERIES MOST VIEWED
BY TEENAGERS IN MADRID**

By

Margarita Crespo Garcés

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

TELEVISION SEXUAL CONTENT AND ADOLESCENTS IN SPAIN: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE TV SERIES MOST VIEWED BY TEENAGERS IN MADRID

By

Margarita Crespo Garcés

The objective of this study is to analyze the nature and amount of sexual content to which adolescents in Spain are exposed when they watch their favorite television series. This is a preliminary step that will lead to making inferences about the potential effects of such content on their attitudes towards sex. The body of this study is devoted to defining the sexual content shown on Spanish television programming, to quantify it, to examine its context, its participants, and its expressed or implied values. The results obtained are compared to equivalent studies conducted in the U.S.

The research questions this paper aims to answer are: RQ1) How much sex are adolescents in Spain exposed to when they watch their favorite television shows?, RQ2) What kinds of sexual content are portrayed on Spanish TV for teenagers to model from?, RQ3) Are there any differences between the domestic and the U.S imported television programs most viewed by Spanish teenagers in terms of amount and kinds of sexual references?, RQ4) What is the level of explicitness (verbal vs. visual references) portrayed by the Spanish programs?, RQ5) Are adolescents in Spain exposed to more or less sexual activities in their television diet than American adolescents?

Bandura's Social Learning Theory is used as theoretical frame to explain how youngsters acquire sexual knowledge, expectations, and attitudes from television.

A mis padres, Pedro y Teresa, a mi hermana y a mi hermano, porque sin su constante apoyo y su cariño esta Tesis no hubiera sido posible.

A mis padres les debo no sólo el haberme dado el beneficio de una educación, sino el haber sido siempre la fuente de aliento, motivación y amor que me ha permitido llegar tan lejos.

A ellos les dedico mi reconocimiento, mi gratitud y la inmensa satisfacción de saber que siempre serán parte de las metas que aún quedan por conquistar...

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claimed to be abundant in explicit and implicit sexual content on adolescent's values, attitudes and behaviors.

The second chapter includes a literature review of the most relevant quantitative analyses of television sexual content. Literature on Bandura's Social Learning Theory is also reviewed. This modeling theory serves as the theoretical frame to base our predictions about the potential impact of TV sexual content on Spaniard adolescents. Social Learning is used to explain how youngsters acquire sexual knowledge, expectations and attitudes from television.

The field work will be described in Chapter 3. A preliminary survey was conducted to select the television programs most viewed by Spaniard adolescents. A sample of programs was obtained from the survey and content analyzed.

Chapter 4 includes the results obtained from the content analysis, regarding the amount and kind of sexual references adolescents in Spain are exposed to. Results from the study in Spain are compared to previous studies conducted in the U.S to see if significant differences exists.

The findings in Chapter 4 and their implications are discussed in Chapter 5 which also includes some hypotheses about the potential impact of TV sexual content on Spaniard adolescents' attitudes. Television has become the main source of observational learning for youngsters. From the models provided by TV programs, adolescents may learn which variations in sexual behavior are socially acceptable, and under what conditions and with whom different sexual

behaviors are deemed appropriate. Sexuality models provided by TV also may affect adolescents' expectations about how people will feel or behave sexually. TV models may affect adolescents' perceptions about how other people feel or behave sexually. And, modeling from sex on television may lead to actual changes in sexual behavior.

Finally, alternative points of reference for future research are suggested.

Chapter 1

The Case of Spain

"Television is the first truly democratic culture --the first culture available to everybody and entirely governed by what the people want. The most terrifying thing is what people do want"
Clive Barnes

TV Sexual Content: How it Became an Issue

A curious fever struck the adolescent population of Spain almost two years ago. The disease was called "Beverly Hills 90210". A few months after the series was first aired in the country, it became a social phenomenon. Youngsters modified their going out patterns, viewing "90210" was the priority number one even before going out with friends. For some groups, meeting in one of the peers' houses to collectively watch the series was the most awaited event of the week. Soon, the adventures and lifestyle of the characters in the series were the main conversational topics among teenagers. And the exchange of videotaped episodes of

the series became a common practice, even mandatory: missing an episode meant being out of the group's dynamics. Suddenly, the love affairs of the main characters in the series, their expensive sports cars, their fancy houses and rich lifestyle were the main topics of discussion among adolescents.

As a sister of one sixteen year old one, who along with his classmates and group of peers also became infected with the "Beverly Hills 90210" fever, I started wondering if my brother, his friends, and all the adolescents in Spain would really see these characters and their lives on television as real, and if they would try to imitate them. I started wondering if watching these series on such a regular basis would have any effects on our youngsters' attitudes, values and even behaviors regarding personal relationship and sexual activity, given the shows' emphasis on love relationships and sex.

Some time afterwards, I determined I was not the only one concerned with that kind of questions raised by a number of television shows of which "Beverly Hills 90210" was only one significant example. Newspapers began talking about associations of parents, educators and even the Catholic Church, complaining about the high amounts of violence and sex contained in television programming, and asking for some kind of action in order to set some limits on the increasing trend.

Background Data on TV Viewing

A national survey about the leisure habits of the Spanish population conducted by the Youth Institute during October-November 1992 showed that watching television is the most prevalent daily activity for adolescents in their leisure time. Ninety six per cent of them reported spending an average of 129 minutes, more than two hours a day, watching TV (Juventud y Consumo, 1993).

In comparison, 80% of the youngsters in the sample reported listening to radio on a daily basis, dedicating an average of 119 minutes (nearly two hours) to this activity each day. Fifty eight per cent of the sample reported reading a newspaper everyday, and 46% answered they dedicated a daily average of 34 minutes to read magazines and comics.

According to this study, the younger ones, those in ages 15 to 19 who are closer to adolescence, are the ones who watch more television with an average of more than two hours a day -139 minutes- (Table 1). Other studies, like the one conducted by Estudio General de Medios --EGM-AIMC, February/April 1992--, corroborates this observation. The EGM study shows that adolescents between 14 and 19 are the ones who spend more time each day watching television (Table 2). These high consumption rates of TV among adolescents does not correspond, however, with equivalent levels of satisfaction with what they watch. Near half the youngsters in the Youth Institute survey reported that they like television "not

much" or "not at all" (Table 3). Once again, the youngest -- ages 15 to 19-- are the ones more satisfied with the television content.

Another interesting observation emanating from the Youth Institute study is that adolescents' viewing habits are largely influenced by other adolescents' habits. Fifty eight per cent of the women in the sample, versus 55% of the men, reported they completely agree with the statement "I usually watch the TV programs that the others also watch" (Table 4).

How are these observations relevant to the topic being discussed? The figures and results exposed help us to state some basic assumptions with important implications on how much, and what kind of sexual TV content adolescents in Spain are exposed to:

a. Watching television is the most prevalent activity for youngsters (15 to 29 years old) in Spain during their leisure time. They spend more than two hours a day exposed to television programming.

b. Those in the age group 14 to 19, closer to adolescence, are the ones who consume more television every day.

c. Adolescents in ages 14 to 19 are the ones who report being more satisfied with television content, and liking it the most.

d. Peers, classmates, and other adolescents influence youngsters' viewing habits. Adolescents usually make their choices about what TV programs to watch based on what other

adolescents choose.

From these assumptions it can be inferred that the adolescent viewing audience for television programs is substantial. Further, a higher proportion of regular viewers consist of younger viewing subgroups in ages 14 to 19. These subgroups may be seen as "higher risk" of being affected by what they see on television, given their lower levels of real world experiences.

Viewing certain TV series seems to be a group phenomenon. Therefore, we infer that most of the adolescents in the country prefer to watch basically the same TV programs, so that the potential effects of their content can be generalized to the overall adolescent population in Spain.

Also, television content labeled as "adult programming" is available during children and youth audience hours --6 p.m. to 10 p.m., called the family hours-- (Educadores, 1993; ABC, January 4, 1995). Therefore, adolescents in Spain are potentially exposed to any kind of sexual content conveyed by television programming, whatever the amount and the kind. All these reasons account for the fact that sex content in television has become an issue in Spain.

One more element, however, needs to be added to this general picture. In May 1988, the incorporation of three private commercial television networks was approved for the first time in Spain, in a bill that became the "Regulatory Law of Telecommunications". The current television system in Spain is a mixed commercial and state-run national

television. It includes two public channels, TVE1 and La2; television corporations of the Autonomous Communities Telemadrid (Madrid), TV-3 and Canal 33 (Cataluña), ETB-1 and ETB-2 (País Vasco), Canal Sur (Andalucía), Canal 9 (Valencia), TVG (Galicia); private channels Antena 3, Tele 5, and Canal +; community cable TV; local television operators; and an ample range of satellite television channels. What is unique in the Spanish case is that the public network is financed by both public funds and advertising (López-Escobar, 1992).

When the legislation allowing commercial television was approved, it led to a battle for advertising and sparked a financial crisis in state television which undermined its identity as a truly public service. Since then, commercial and public networks have engaged in fierce strategies to attract audiences. In that battle for the best ratings, TV networks have pushed at the boundaries of public taste and acceptance, giving priority to low-taste programming and increasing the amount of sex and violence content in their daily menus.

The critical voices have linked television content to the liberalization of attitudes, relationships, and behavior dealing with sex. Their concern is that current television programming is somehow related to some of the most serious problems adolescents are faced nowadays, mainly the rapid spreading of AIDs, the transmission of other sexually related diseases, and the increase of adolescent pregnancies.

According to the Federación Española de Planificación Familiar (Spanish Federation of Family Planning), 7 in every 100 female adolescents (an estimate of 270,000) in the country --in ages 15 to 19-- get pregnant every year (El País, July 1, 1993). The problem of pregnancy in adolescence is also hitting other developed countries like the U.S., where more than one million adolescents get pregnant each year, with one-fourth of all pregnancies occurring in mothers under 20 years old (Greenberg, 1993).

Voices of Concern

The Spanish Association of Pediatrics contributed some of the scarce data available in Spain dealing with television and minors. According to the pediatricians' figures, children watch between 1,000 and 1,500 hours of television each year. That amount of time is superior to the total time minors spend at school. When children finish school, they had spent the equivalent of eight years in front of the TV set. One child or adolescent in Spain annually is exposed through television to about 12,000 violent acts, 14,000 sexual references, and 2,000 commercials advertising alcohol (El País, February 28, 1993).

Voices have risen from different sectors of the society denouncing the degrading of television content quality and

the abusive use of sex and violence in the general programming. Very different social groups have expressed their concern about the negative impacts that specially violence and sex might have on children and adolescents.

"Television has substituted the family in transmitting sociocultural values and valid behaviors, and children's sexuality is precociously stimulated" (El País, October 19, 1993). This statement was part of the Report *Situación de la familia en España* (Situation of the family in Spain), sent by the Spanish Episcopal Conference to the Vatican for the 1994 International Year of the Family celebration. The text is a critical evaluation of the mass media, specially television, in terms of the messages and values transmitted and their impact on children, and the family in general. The Report gets even more specific when it says: "Shows and films in children's programming are loaded with violence and aggressiveness, competitiveness and fight. They transmit the culture of 'the total success at the expense of the enemy' (...) ideal worlds and fantasies far away from the Spanish reality."

Two series mentioned in the Report are "Melrose Place" and "Beverly Hills 90210" which "incite to consumerism, spread out models of unreal beauty and alienating values that drench into immature adolescents". According to the Report, these kind of shows transmit values based upon money, success, easy life, power, sex and based, above all, upon trivial relationships lacking compromise and responsibility.

Talking about TV series and soap operas, the Spanish bishops claim that they stimulate antisocial attitudes by presenting incestuous relationships, adultery, bastard kids, infidelity, and bare passions carried to their final consequences. The Report indicates that the spectator bombed with these kind of relationships is coming to accept them as something habitual.

Among the series criticized is the Spanish production "Farmacia de guardia", which has achieved the highest national ratings in the last years (this series was the most viewed by adolescents in the survey conducted prior to the content analysis described later in this paper). The reason for criticism is that the series' main characters are the members of a family where the parents are divorced and maintain excellent relations. The series is based in actual situations treated from a 'tolerant and progressive' spirit, and dealing with topics such as the defense of condom use, AIDs and racism.

On February 1993, the Spanish Confederation of Students and Parents Association (CEAPA), and the National Catholic Confederation of Family Parents and Student's Parents (CONCAPA) submitted a letter to the Ministries of Social Affairs and Justice demanding the creation of an Ethics Code treating advertising and programming on television to which minors are exposed (El País, February 28, 1993).

The Popular Party (PP), the second political party in Spain has claimed the necessity of a more strict control over

the television messages of violence, sex and xenophobia to avoid the negative impacts that these kind of content have on the youth. In September 1993, the PP presented a proposal in the Senate urging the government to regulate the public television time schedules, and to promote the creation of an Ethics Code for commercial networks. The proposal asked for a modification of the legislation in order to guarantee that films and TV series "which are identified as non recommendable for over 18 years old viewers, or are rated 'X'", are not aired during the family hours, before 10 p.m (El País, September 25, 1993).

An Ethics Code For TV Networks

As a consequence of the pressures exercised by these groups, in February 1993, the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MEC) signed an agreement with the public and commercial television networks to create an Ethics Code protecting infant and juvenile audiences from violence, sex and consumerism on TV, and enforcing the educative character of this medium. The Code would be self-regulatory and would be elaborated by the TV networks. The Ministry would participate in the project by advising through experts in education. The Code would have a moral value for the self-regulation of the different broadcasters but it would not be

imposed as a legal rule.

The Ethics Code proposal included different aspects dealing with the treatment of violence, drug consumption, sex and language in programs designed for children and adolescents. It assessed the necessity of avoiding those sequences attacking the dignity of individuals, and those involving discrimination against others because of color, ethnicity, sex, or religion (El País, February 26, 1993).

According to the text, violence on television will be excluded when it appears like a laudable behavior, attractive or useful to reach certain purposes. Violence will also be excluded when exercised by media available to children and youngsters; when it involves a gratuitous cruelty or it could be traumatic to the young audience; or when it is presented as a solution or accompanying the performance of sexual acts. The project also urges broadcasters to avoid the direct or indirect encouragement of tobacco, alcohol and drug consumption, and the scenes of explicit sexual content lacking educational or informational value which could seriously affect children and adolescent's sensibility.

The proposal underlines that the Code is not an attempt to hide violence but to present it, if it is necessary, like something to condemn and not to be imitated, because it is understood that the effects of possible imitation is what is to be avoided. With reference to sexual content, the Code recognizes the plurality of moral standards existing in the Spanish society with that respect: something can be offensive

to some individuals yet perfectly acceptable to some others. The Ethics guidelines are not intended to function as censorship. Instead, the Code states that the audience must be informed of such sexual content by placing a warning message at the beginning of the program, as well as in the promotional advertisements (ABC, April 14, 1993).

The compromise between the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the TV networks was finally reached and the Ethics Code was ratified on April 26, 1993.

Minors and adolescents in Spain are also protected by the Law 25/94, a transposition of the European Directive about television, minors' protection, and advertising. The Association of Tele-viewers and Radio-listeners (ATR) elaborated a report of the television programming follow-up during the last four months of 1994. In the report, the ATR denounces the persistency of the TV networks of maintaining programs with violent and pornographic content within the family hours --6 p.m. to 10 p.m.--. According to the ATR, this is a violation of the transposition of the European Directive "Television without Frontiers" that came into effect on July 1994.

Chapter IV, article 17, of the Directive is dedicated to minors' protection from television programming. The chapter states that "TV emissions will not include programs, or scenes, or messages of any kind which may seriously damage the physical, mental, or moral development of minors" (ABC de la Comunicación, January 4, 1994). The legislation also

indicates that when programs susceptible of harming the physical, mental, or moral development of minors are aired outside the family hours, audiences must be warned of their content by acoustic or/and visual means.

The ATR's report add a list of programs that, despite their adult content, are aired during the family hours when children and adolescents have a higher consumption of television. Within those TV programs is "Canguros", a domestic television series rated third among the TV shows preferred by high school students in our sample.

The Question Of Media Responsibility

All the pressure groups which are asking for youngsters' protection against the potential negative effects of actual sex content on television would like to see the entertainment media reducing its amount, or dealing with sexual-matters more realistically, and in a more healthy related way. But two basic obstacles stand up. One of them is that television's priority for attracting and satisfying large audiences is not compatible with educational objectives. If the amount of sex cannot be reduced, one solution to the problem would be to substitute current negative portrayals by prosocial and healthy sexual content. But the changes that can be made are minimal, generally reduced to inserting some

brief comment about responsible behaviors, or changing an antisocial depiction. The reason for this narrow range of possible adjustments is that TV executives resist requests for extensive changes that might undermine audience share and thus lose commercial support. Therefore, program creators can make only minor changes without sacrificing the enjoyment value of their offering.

The second obstacle is that networks have certain policies of self-censorship in "editorializing" on controversial or taboo subjects, for example abortion or birth control. Even when it comes to less controversial issues, there is a tendency to be very cautious in treating aspects that are considered sensitive to certain segments of viewers (Atkin and Arkin, 1990). While parents' associations would welcome more references to responsible sex and the use of condoms, religious groups would completely oppose any kind of reference to such topics, even those dealing with sex in a responsible way.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Part 1

*"All television is educational television.
The question is: what is it teaching?"*
Nicholas Johnson

What Prior Content Analyses Show

How much sexual content do adolescents find in television, and what are the characteristics of such models?

Studies oriented to answer that question haven't been found in Spain. Only one study (Espina Barrio, 1993) addresses questions related to sexuality on television, but it contains some limitations which do not permit drawing general conclusions or making inferences from the results obtained. The programs analyzed were selected from only one

TV network, the public television network TVE-1. As in the rest of Europe, public television in Spain is characterized by high quality, family oriented programming, with traditional standards regarding morals, and less use of sexual and violent contents as appeals to attract audiences than non public channels. Had the study included programs from the commercial networks it is expected that the total amount of sexual activities would have increased considerably.

Another limitation is that the sample includes too wide and general a range of programs, namely news, movies, TV series, cartoons, children and youth programs, musicals, cultural programming, quiz shows and commercials. This sample allows for general conclusions about the amount of sex on TV during the specific week recorded. However, when it comes to relate the content coded to its possible influence on viewers, it would be of more interest to know what groups in the audience are more exposed to the sexual content, and focus on the analysis of the shows most viewed by each of those groups.

A total of 144 hours of programming (one entire week of the 1991 season) was recorded and coded in order to identify sexual behaviors defined as acts performed by persons or animals oriented to excite, prepare, remember, insinuate or realize sexual activities. The study yielded a total of 526 sexual incidents (an average of 3.65 references per hour). The average was 75.14 sexual acts per day, with a high

deviation (28.1) occurring on Fridays and Saturdays when the hours of programming containing sexual incidents significantly increase. The most frequent category was the physical contact (39%), followed by gestures (33%) and verbal instances (26%). Heterosexual acts were predominant (97%). Only 6 instances (almost 2%) of homosexuality were found, and only one reference to rape.

From his findings, Espina Barrio concluded that the public network portrayal of sexuality consisted of short and passionate acts between a man and a woman, usually implying words or a romantic kiss. Illegal forms of sex were completely absent, and in 33% of the instances, the sexual act occurred among partners engaged in a steady relationship. The presentation of sex on the public network is thus moderate in amount, and traditional and conservative in the kind of depictions used. These results, however, are not suitable for generalization when commercial TV is considered.

Whereas TV sex content is still an unexplored area of research in Spain, researchers in the United States started investigating the information and values contained in TV sexual content, as well as the participating characters back in the mid 1970s. Since the early studies showing mild depictions of sexual activity, and rather few instances of such acts, subsequent research found evidence of an increasing trend toward more sexual references and more explicit depictions of sexual activity.

Sexual Intimacy in Prime-Time Television

One of the early studies analyzed 50 hours of programming from the 1975-76 season (Franzblau, Sprafkin, and Rubinstein, 1977). Only two acts of implied heterosexual intercourse were reported, and no incidents of homosexual activity were coded. The sexual behaviors most frequently found (more often than once per hour) were kissing, embracing, flirting, partner-seeking, and non aggressive touching. Physically intimate behaviors were shown more frequently in the 8-9 p.m. time period, and most frequently on situation comedies and variety shows (Figure 2).

* A dramatic increase in sexual activity was found in the following study conducted by Fernandez-Collado, Greenberg, Korzeny, and Atkin (1978), in which 58 hours of prime-time and Saturday morning programming from 1976-77 were content analyzed. The most common instances were sexual intercourse between unmarried partners (41) and prostitution (28). Across the 77 shows examined, intercourse between unmarried partners occurred or was implied seven times as often as intercourse between husband and wife. Intimate sexual behaviors were most frequently presented or referred to from 9-11 p.m. (2.7 acts per hour), and more in TV series (3 sex acts per hour) followed by crime shows and situation comedies (1.5 acts per hour). In the same study, Fernandez-Collado and his colleagues did a separate analysis of a 28 hours subsample of shows most viewed by children. They found an almost equal

rate of reference to unmarried intercourse, whereas only one example of that activity occurred among married partners.

A follow-up study was conducted to analyze 48.5 hours of prime-time fictional television in the fall of 1977, and 56 hours in the summer of 1978 (Greenberg, Graef, Fernandez-Collado, Korzenny, and Atkin, 1980). The data from the Fernandez-Collado et al. (1978) study were reanalyzed and direct comparisons among the three samples were done. Sexual behavior was divided into six categories: Intercourse between marriage partners, unmarried heterosexual intercourse, homosexual acts, rape, prostitution, and other intimate sexual behaviors (such as petting, pornography and homosexual intercourse). Although each successive sample showed a drop in the available rate of intimate sexual references (overall references per hour: Fall 1976, 2.22; Fall 1977, 1.35; Summer 1978, 1.04), the findings confirmed the large increase in sexual activity since the Franzblau et al. (1977) study. Heterosexual intercourse between unmarried partners was, again, the largest category of sexual activity, with one incident of such activity occurring every two hours during prime time.

The study by Greenberg et al. (1980) also determined selected demographic characteristics of the participants in the sexual instances. Interestingly, they found a concentration of intimate sex in the young adult and mid adult years. Seventy five per cent of all acts occurred among those 20-49 years of age, a proportion 11% greater than that

age range's representation in the population of TV characters. They also found that women were as likely as men to be participants, both in initiating and receiving roles.

The 1977-1978 season was object of another content analysis (Silverman, Sprafkin and Rubinstein, 1979) which included a sample of 64 prime-time TV programs. The intention of the study was to provide a more comprehensive picture of how physical intimacy and sexuality were portrayed on prime-time television. Researchers found a big increase in TV's use of flirtatious behaviors and verbal innuendos. The week of programming examined appeared low on sex but high on suggestion. The most explicit sexual category was intercourse, but no overt physical portrayals of this category were found. However, contextual implications that sexual intercourse had happened or was about to happen occurred a total of 15 times. This frequency represents an increase over the 1975 sample (Franzblau, Sprafkin and Rubinstein, 1977) where neither overt nor contextually implied intercourse was seen even once. Flirtatious behaviors (physical suggestiveness) on the other hand, quadrupled in frequency from 1975: less than one seductive behavior per hour in 1975 versus more than three in 1977. Sexual innuendos increased more than five-fold from the earlier analysis: In 1975 a TV viewer could hear an average of about one innuendo per hour, whereas in 1977 she/he could hear about seven. As in the 1975 study, physical suggestiveness and sexual innuendos were more frequently shown on humorous programs,

namely situation comedies and variety shows.

From these results Silverman and her colleagues concluded that although they didn't find explicit sex on prime-time TV, there does appear to be an increasing tendency to "tease" the audience behaviorally (through flirting), verbally (through innuendo), and visually (through contextually implied intercourse).

In order to assess whether the obtained increases in sexual references were due to a temporary emphasis on sex or whether they were the beginning of a new trend in prime-time TV, Sprafkin and Silverman (1981) updated the previous study with an analysis of 68 programs from the 1978-1979 TV season. Results were compared to the two previous seasons analyzed (Franzblau et al., 1976; Silverman et al., 1978). The frequency of occurrence of several of the controversial categories increased substantially across the three samples: contextually implied intercourse increased from no weekly occurrences in 1975 to 15 in 1977 and 24 in 1978; and sexual innuendos increased in frequency from about one reference per hour in 1975 to 7 in 1977, and to almost 11 in 1978. Yet, the most dramatic increase was in verbal references to intercourse: from 2 occurrences per week in 1975 to 6 references in 1977, and 53 in 1978. Among the discouraged sexual practice categories coded in the 1977-1978 season, there was a substantial increase in frequency for two categories from 1977 to 1978: allusions to prostitution increased more than four-fold, and allusions to aggressive

sexual contacts increased three-fold.

Sapolsky (1982) conducted a two-year content analysis of prime-time network television which revealed a substantial increase (28%) in sex on television from 1978 (628 incidents) to 1979 (806 incidents). Sexual innuendo remained the dominant form of sex on television in 1979, with 331 (41%) of all sexual incidents classified under this category. Consistent with earlier studies, the majority of sex acts in 1979 (56%) involved a male and female who were not married (premarital), and only one in four sexual acts were portrayed within the context of marriage. Although sex was typically handled in a humorous fashion, this study found that 55% of the non criminal sex acts and 100% of the criminal sex acts were given a non humorous treatment in 1979. Regarding the time of presentation, Sapolsky concluded that the family viewing hour contained as much sex as later evening hours.

Prime-time television series most heavily viewed by adolescents were analyzed by Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki Heeter, Soderman, and Linsangan (1993). The study included a sample of three episodes of each 19 shows preferred by young viewers, during the 1985 season. The programs sample yielded a rate of just under three sexual instances per hour of programming. Intercourse accounted for 39% of the total coded acts, and kissing was the second most frequent category occurring 1.14 times per hour. Only 37% of the coded acts were visual, with the majority of the sexual activity being verbal references. Researchers found that premarital

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intercourse and sexual activity occurring among persons not married to each other nor to anyone was greater in the prime-time series than in a parallel sample of soap operas. The majority of sexual acts on prime-time were rated as high in explicitness.

Louis Harris and Associates (April, 1987) conducted a content analysis of afternoon and evening time slots of the 1986-87 season and compared the results with earlier published studies (Sprafkin and Silverman, 1981; Franzblau, Sprafkin, and Rubinstein, 1977). The study revealed that American TV viewers were exposed to an average of 29 instances per hour of sexual behavior during that season. Putting it in other words, this means that over 16,000 instances of sexual material would actually be seen by the typical TV viewer over the course of a year. Only a little over 100 of those 16,000 would be counterbalancing references to sexuality education, sexually transmitted disease, birth control or abortion. That represents a ratio of less than 1 in 150. However, the high number of sexual references per hour found in this study is partly explained because the same act was coded twice, once for each of the participants when both persons were present in the behavior. Also, non-sexual kisses were counted as sexual activity.

Comparing their results with earlier studies, Louis Harris and Associates outlined some over time trends regarding sexual content on television. Verbal references to intercourse, which rose dramatically in number during the

late 1970's, have continued to increase (the actual figure is about one instance per hour). The number of instances of implied intercourse has nearly doubled since the late 1970's (from 0.43 to 0.80 per hour); and instances of deviant or discouraged sexual behavior have also continued a slow upward trend in number (now averaging 2.8 per hour). However, sexual innuendo and suggestiveness have dropped (from 11 instances per hour to less than 4 of verbal suggestiveness, and from about 3 instances per hour to slightly under 2 of physical suggestiveness).

The 1986-87 study by Louis Harris and Associates was replicated during the 1987-88 season (Louis Harris and Associates, January 1988). The researchers found 27 references to sexual behavior. They also found that references to "deviant behaviors" on serial dramas had increased over 300% over the previous season. They concluded that sex had become increasingly explicit in both time slots, and that there were almost no references to sexuality education, STDs, birth control or abortion. It is to be noted that explicit physical portrayals of sexual intercourse occurred in network shows studied in the 1987-88 season for the first time. In both seasons and of all types of shows, afternoon serial dramas contained the most sexual content (35 instances per hour).

In their 1989 analysis, Sapolsky and Tabarlet (1991) coded a total of 906 sexual incidents during one week of program coding (57.5 hours). Comparing these results to data

from the 1979 season (Sapolsky, 1982), they found an increase in sexual references: nearly 16 instances of visual or verbal references to sex per hour on 1989 prime-time TV, versus 13 an hour on 1979. As in the previous decade, the authors found that the predominant form of sex on television in 1989 was innuendo. The authors found that only 4.4% of the sexual content of television in 1989 dealt with matters of sexual responsibility, and none of the 18 incidents involving safe sex and STDs specifically dealt with the AIDS issue. Sapolsky and Tabarlet concluded from their study that television has not diminished its portrayals of sex, and that prime-time sex continues to occur overwhelmingly outside the marriage. According to the researchers, prime-time television offers a consistent and repetitive set of messages regarding sexual behavior. Adolescents who regularly watch prime-time TV are exposed to a mix of messages such as marital infidelity, casual sex, the objectification of women, and exploitive relationships. Also, whereas sex in the 1970s appeared most frequently in comedies, in the 1980s it is increasingly common to encounter sexual action and words in dramatic formats.

Lowry and Shidler (1993) analyzed a sample of 76 hours of 1991 prime-time programming using the same category system used by Lowry and Towles' study of 1987 prime-time programs (Lowry and Towles, 1989). Contrary to public perceptions of excessive sex incidents on television, they found a decrease in the hourly rates of sexual behaviors in the programs from

fall 1987 (10.94 sex acts per hour) to fall 1991 (9.66 per hour). However, despite the moderate decrease of overall sexual references, both verbal and physical references to intercourse (married and unmarried) increased by 84% from a rate of 1.77 per hour in 1987 to 3.26 per hour in 1991.

Talking About Sex on Day-Time Soap Operas

Greenberg, Abelman and Neuendorf (1981) analyzed the type, frequency, and location of sexual intimacies on TV soap operas from the 1976 (15.5 hours), 1979 (21 hours), and 1980 (28.5 hours) seasons. They found that the net changes in rate of occurrence of intimate sexual acts and references to such acts were an increase from 2.00 to 2.28 acts per hour between 1976 and 1979, and a decrease to 1.80 acts per hour in 1980. Overall, petting acts were the most frequently occurring activity overall (52% of all sexual incidents). Unmarried partners outnumbered married partners in incidents of and references to intercourse by a ratio of four to one. In addition, the physical and verbal explicitness of each incident (high, low or absent) was assessed. There were virtually no physical displays accompanying intercourse and all other sexual acts (excluding petting). In contrast, verbal explicitness (generally judged as low) almost always accompanied intercourse and all other sexual incidents but petting. Petting incidents were always physically explicit,

typically at a low level, and one third were not accompanied by verbal references. Referring to the relationships between act participants and non participants, married characters discussed the intercourse activity of unmarried characters in most of the cases; and 49% of the incidents of intercourse involved lovers, 29% involved strangers, and only 6% involved married partners (Figure 3).

Sexual content on daytime soap operas also was analyzed by Lowry, Love and Kirby (1981). They examined 12 soap operas aired during Fall 1979. They found 329 codable sex acts across the 50 hours of programming analyzed, with a frequency rate of 7 acts per hour. Especially noticeable was the rate of sexual incidents between individuals not married to each other. There were almost 4 instances of sexual behavior involving unmarried partners for every instance involving married partners. The single category with the largest frequency was erotic touching/unmarried, which accounted for 35% of all acts (115 incidents). Also noticeable is the total absence of any instances in several categories such as incest, homosexuality, and masturbation. There were no physical representations of intercourse, prostitution, and aggressive sexual contact. Regarding the mode of presentation of the sexual acts, Lowry et al. (1981) concluded that the dominant mode of presenting sex in soap operas is talking about it. Fifty three per cent of the codable instances (173) were verbal sexual behavior, including talking about intercourse, rape, and prostitution.

Subsequent to these results, a replication of the 1979 study by Lowry and his colleagues (1981) yielded a substantial increase in sex between unmarried persons on TV soap operas, and a norm of promiscuous sex, with few attendant consequences (Lowry and Towles, 1989). This study made a special emphasis on how soap operas portray issues relating to the prevention of STDs and pregnancy. A sample of 52.5 hours from the 1987 season was examined. A total of 387 codable sexual behaviors was found, which yields an overall rate of 7.4 acts per hour (compared with 6.6 per hour found in 1979). The major conclusions drawn from the comparisons of the two seasons are: an increase in the overall amount of sex on network soap operas; a substantial increase in the erotic touching category between unmarried persons; and an increase in verbal references to prostitution. There was no verbal, implied or physical treatment of pregnancy prevention or STD prevention in the 1987 sample. The conclusion of researchers in this study was that "network TV soap operas were offering a view of sex as a spur-of-the-moment activity pursued primarily by unmarried partners with little concern about either birth control or disease prevention" (Lowry and Towles, 1989, p.82).

Thirty three hours of daytime soap operas during the summer of 1982 were analyzed by Greenberg and D'Alessio (1985). Overall they found three incidents of sexual activity per hour, nearly two thirds of them referred to sexual intercourse, with petting accounting for half of the

remainder. The study's findings followed the trend of earlier studies about sex between unmarried partners. One fifth of the intercourse acts occurred between married people and in another 22%, one sex partner was married to someone else. Analyzing the initiator of the behavior, both partners were found equally responsible for initiating more than half of the sex acts. When there was a single initiator, in most cases it was the male (19 of 30 pairings). Regarding the age of the participants in sexual acts in soap operas, they tend to be young. None of the characters shown as sexually active were 40 or older. Another characteristic found in this study is the increasing prevalence of talking about sexual acts on the soaps. Specifically, the results suggest a tendency for females to be more likely to talk about someone else's sexual activity.

Consistent with these trends, in their 1985 study of soap operas and TV series most heavily viewed by young viewers during day-time and prime-time television, Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman, and Linsangan (1993) found higher overall per-hour rates of sexual content present for daytime and nighttime, as well as higher numbers of sex/acts references. Comparing their results with previous studies, soap's sex rate in 1985 (4 acts per hour of soap opera) was 21% higher than 1982 data, and 103% higher than 1980. The most prominent sexual act referred to in each of the three soaps analyzed was intercourse (2.29 times per hour-long episode), which accounted for 62% of all the coded

sexual activity. The majority of sexual activity for both soaps and series was verbal exchanges. In the soaps, for acts of intercourse in particular, only in 16% of the acts were both participants present. This means that someone was typically talking about someone else's sexual intercourse, or about someone's activity with a third party. For both soaps and series, participants more often hold positive attitudes towards the sexual act whereas nonparticipants predominantly expressed negative attitudes.

Finally, Greenberg and Busselle (1994) analyzed 50 hours of soap operas from the summer of 1994, and compared their findings with Greenberg's 1985 study for three of the soaps. Their conclusion was that soaps in 1994 contained more frequent sexual incidents on an hourly average (6.6 sexual incidents per hour long episode). The average number of incidents increased from 3.7 to 5.0 within the same soaps analyzed a decade earlier. The most prevalent form of sex was physical intercourse, primarily among partners not married to anyone (2.4 incidents each hour in the 1994 sample). The vast majority of incidents featured premarital relationships, with a great rise of single persons' participation. Data from the 1994 sample showed that participants were significantly more positive towards their sexual activity for all acts than non-participants. The study also revealed that the sexual activity was increasingly made manifest in a visual form as well as verbal. Two date rape storylines that did not exist a decade earlier were found in the 1994 sample.

TV Sexual Behaviors for Potential Adoption

After reviewing the major published studies of sex in the soaps and on prime-time television, what can be said about the evolution of sexual content on TV?

As a summary, the trend of the amount and form of presentation of sex on television is characterized by:

(a) An increase in the overall number of sexual acts/references, including prostitution and homosexuality.

(b) Modest to large increases in implied and verbal references to sexual intercourse.

(c) Portrayals of premarital sex and marital infidelity are prevalent. More sexual activities occur between people not married to each other than between marital partners by a 3-1 or 4-1 ratio.

(d) Sex is usually presented in a suggestive form, with an increase of flirtatious behaviors and verbal innuendos.

e) Less than 1 in 10 incidents of sexual intercourse have any visual component.

f) Kissing and erotic touching (or petting) are the only common sexual acts made visual for the viewers.

g) Talking about sex is more prevalent than engaging in it. The talk most frequently consists of denials, wishful thinking, and outright rejection of the activity.

h) STDs, birth control, abortion, and homosexuality are rarely if ever mentioned.

i) Although sex on television is most often treated humorously, the portrayal of sex within dramatic formats has increased.

j) Sex-role stereotyping is present, with females being more likely to act seductively, and to be recipients of males' verbal innuendo. However, women are starting to be found as initiators of the sexual activity as often as men.

k) The participants in sexual acts frequently are in the 20 to 30 age category, and there is a tendency for females to be even younger.

These are some of the patterns of behavior, predominant themes, characters, and relationships that television offers for potential adoption. The next step is to determine whether exposure to these content systems cultivates some kind of social reality views in audiences, specifically adolescents.

Part 2

"What's done to children, they will do to society"
Karl Menninger

Does Sex on TV Have an Effect on Adolescents?

After reviewing the existing literature on television sexual content, the next question is to ask about the impacts of those kinds of sexual contents in adolescents, and about their learning from television sexual models.

The "social learning theory" (Bandura, 1977) is the theoretical frame in which predictions of the potential impact of TV sexual content on Spaniard adolescents will be based. Special emphasis will be made on the modeling aspect of the theory. According to this perspective, adolescents not only learn actual behaviors from observations of those behaviors on television, but they also learn attitudes, values, moral judgments, self-perceptions and social reality perceptions from vicarious models (Bandura, 1971; Tan, 1985; DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1989). Social learning theory is here applied to the acquisition of sexual knowledge, expectations and attitudes. In the absence of "real life"

experiences regarding sex, adolescents learn about it by observing the behaviors of others, thus avoiding the tedious and sometimes dangerous trial and error process. But viewers not only learn new behaviors from television models. In absence of other sources of information about how to evaluate different sexual behaviors, youngsters adapt the moral judgments and social sanctions they observe on TV models to form their own opinions, attitudes, and expectations about sex in real life. As it is stated by Bandura (1977, p. 39) "It has been repeatedly shown that children tend to alter their standards of moral evaluation in the direction of models' judgments". Symbolic modeling influences the development of adolescent's moral judgments by what it portrays as acceptable or reprehensible conduct and the sanctions and justifications applied to it.

In our society the main source of observational learning for adolescents is mass media, especially television. When asked how they learn about sex, conception, and birth control, teenagers rank television as the fourth most important source of information, after parents, friends, and school (Louis Harris and Associates, 1986). In a study of youth's perceived sources of sexual information, Thornburg (1981) found that the peer group was always rated #1, and media usage was usually rated #2. Specially important from the modeling perspective is that many teenagers believe that TV gives a realistic picture of such topics as sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and the consequences of sex,

family planning to prevent pregnancy and people making love. However, with age and increased education teenagers become more skeptical --give television less credit for offering accurate and realistic information related to sexual activity. Despite this, still many of those who are most in need of reliable information --the youngest teenagers, those who have not had any formal sex education, and those whose parents are not college graduates-- are the most likely to think that TV is realistic.

Some studies attribute additional influence to mass media as sexual "socializers" based on an absence of competing information from the traditional sources of learning --parents, teachers, church-- (Roberts, 1993). From the models provided by television programs adolescents may learn which variations in sexual behavior are socially acceptable, and under what conditions and with whom different sexual behaviors are deemed appropriate. A child may learn from TV, for example, that certain kinds of public displays of intimate affection by a couple are not socially acceptable.

Previous research provides evidence that teenagers who lacked alternative sources of information reported turning to mass media for information about the norms of dating behavior, presumably to learn how to interact with the opposite sex (Gerson, 1966). More recent work demonstrates a relationship between exposure to typical TV programming and beliefs and expectations concerning sexual behavior within

the larger society. College students who frequently view soap operas, with their abundant sexual themes, give higher estimates of real-life love affairs, out-of-wedlock children and divorces (Buerkel-Rothfuss and Mayes, 1981).

At the individual level, media messages may affect personal perceptions and expectations regarding adolescents' own sexual behavior. High school and college students attributing great sexual proficiency and satisfaction to television characters tended to report less satisfaction with their own first experiences of intercourse than did students not making such attributions (Baran, Winter 1976; Baran, Autumn 1986). Sexuality models provided by TV may also affect adolescents' expectations about how people will feel or behave sexually. This is expected to have an influence on the adolescent's interpersonal relationships, for instance when the adolescent interacts with a new date. A teenager's idea of what is the appropriate age to start having sex may be affected by the models seen in his/her favorite TV series.

Finally, modeling from sex on television may lead to actual changes in sexual behavior. An adolescent female may imitate her favorite female character's flirting techniques when trying to attract her male classmates' attention, for example.

In their review of existing literature on media exposure and its effects on adolescent's sexual attitudes and behaviors, Strouse and Buerkel-Rothfuss (1987) found indirect evidence of the possibility that TV and other media may

influence youth's sexuality. They cite Fabes and Strouse's study (1984), based on social learning theory, which found that college students selected persons primarily from the media when they were asked to identify anyone whom they considered to be models of irresponsible and responsible sexual behavior. In a related study, Fabes and Strouse (1987) found that the same college students who identified media personalities as their top choice of models of sexual responsibility also reported more permissive sexual attitudes and a higher level of sexual activity.

The evidence reviewed in this section contains convincing cues to support the following rationale:

- 1) Popular mass media have been found to contain many nonmarital, inaccurate, and unrealistic sexual themes and messages (Greenberg and D'Alessio, 1985; Sapolski and Tabarlet, Fall 1991; Sprafkin and Silverman, 1981).

- 2) As a consequence, if it is true that heavy TV viewers tend to believe that what they see on television represents reality (Louis Harris and Associates, 1986; Buerkel-Rothfuss and Mayes, 1981)

- 3)... and if it is true that youth will imitate admired media figures as suggested by observational learning theory (Fabes and Strouse, 1984 and 1987)

- 4) ... then, it would be expected that those who are more exposed to popular mass media would exhibit more liberal (i.e., media-like) sexual attitudes, values, expectations, and behavior.

Theoretical Frame: Social Learning Theory

"Children have more need of models than of critics"

Joseph Joubert

Mass media affect people in at least two different ways. As persuasive agents, mass media influence people by changing or reinforcing existing opinions, attitudes, and behaviors. However, as mass media become more pervasive in our daily lives, they have the potential to create and shape many of our shared attitudes, values, behaviors, and perceptions of social reality. Mass media, thus, become important socialization agents influencing how individuals acquire new forms of action, or new ideas, that modify people's habitual modes of responding to the physical or social environment. The influence of mass media in the acquisition of these response tendencies (which are not inherited but learned through socialization) is referred to as "social effects".

Bandura's "social learning theory" (Bandura, 1977) explains the role of the media in that socialization process. It explains how we learn from direct experience as well as from observation or modeling. Through modeling, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed from observing others, and that coded information serves as guide for action on later occasions. Social learning theory is particularly relevant to mass communication because many of the behaviors

we learn through modeling are first observed in the mass media. Social or observational learning theory explains "how individuals observe other people's actions and how they come to adopt those patterns of action as personal modes of response to problems, conditions, or events in their own lives" (DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1989, p. 212). Therefore, this theory is concerned with indirect influences on both individuals and society, and with both immediate and long-term perspectives on the acquisition of new responses. According to social learning theory, adoption of a new behavior or changes in attitudes or opinions can result from a single exposure to the model, or from seeing the stimulus modeled repeatedly. Dealing with TV violence, a series of early experiments conducted by Bandura showed that children can learn new and complex aggressive acts simply by observing those acts performed once by a model. Children can perform these acts up to six months after first observing the model (Tan, 1985).

The learning process starts with an event that can be directly experienced by a person, or indirectly observed (presented through TV, books and other mass media). The event may involve actual performance of a behavior which can be learned from observation of that behavior. On the other hand, the event could illustrate patterns of thought --attitudes, values, moral judgments, and social reality perceptions-- which are learned through abstract modeling. Abstract modeling allows us to symbolically represent and store the

modeled events in our minds, and to retrieve and apply them to different situations of our lives.

Several factors account for television being such an important source for behavior and attitude modeling. The scope of what we could learn directly from our limited daily routines is significantly enlarged by the mass media by exposing us to modeling events that we would otherwise not have any contact with. Our perceptions of social reality are thus heavily influenced by vicarious experiences we see, hear, and read from the mass media. The more people's images of reality derive from the media's symbolic environment, the greater is its social impact. Another reason why the mass media (specially visual media) occupy a central role in socialization is that a single model can transmit new behavior and thought patterns simultaneously to large groups of people in widely dispersed locations.

The effects of observational learning are magnified on television through the process of abstract modeling. In abstract modeling "observers derive the principles underlying specific performances for generating behavior that goes beyond what they have seen or heard" (Bandura, 1977, p. 40). Viewers extract the common attributes exemplified in the diverse responses modeled on television and formulate rules for generating behavior with similar structural characteristics under similar circumstances. Furthermore, observational learning from television does occur even when the observer does not perform the model's responses under the

same setting in which they are exemplified, when neither the model nor the observers are reinforced, and when the performance of the responses acquired observationally are delayed for days, weeks, or months.

Finally, television's potential as a socializer source is emphasized by the creative modeling process. According to observational modeling, viewers combine aspects of various models into new responses that differ from the responses shown by the individual sources. Due to this potential to come up with innovative patterns of behavior and beliefs, modeling influences can weaken conventional inclinations by exemplifying novel responses to common situations. Unlike familiar routines where there is little incentive to consider alternatives and where the unconventional is not only unexplored but usually negatively received, television exposes people to divergently thinking models that enhance creativity through the innovative synthesis of different models of influence. The result of that innovative synthesis can be new attitudes, new opinions, and new beliefs different from the conventional style, or the traditional socially accepted value system.

The first step in the social learning process is attention (Figure 1). In order to learn from an event, we first have to observe it. From all the external stimuli surrounding us we select the events we pay attention to according to several variables. Attention to an event is determined by characteristics of the event (or modeling

stimuli) and by characteristics of the observer. The characteristics that make events most likely to draw attention and therefore to be modeled are distinctiveness (how different the event is), simplicity (as opposed to difficult or complicated), prevalence (repeated observation), and affective valence (observer's positive or negative feelings elicited by the event). Whether people feel positively or negatively towards events is determined by such factors as salience of the event (its relation to past, present, or expected experiences) and reinforcement (the event fulfills a need by providing solutions to problems, diversion, etc.).

Among the observer's characteristics determining attention are the person's capacity to process information (which is related to age and intelligence, and influences how well he or she can learn from observed experiences); perceptual set (which affects what features are learned from the observation, and is determined by moods, needs, values, and previous experiences); past reinforcement (if a person has been previously reinforced or rewarded for attending to an event or class of events, then he or she will likely attend to similar events in the future); and arousal level considered as a facilitator of modeling (a person who is emotionally aroused --sad, angry, anxious, afraid-- is more likely to be attentive to stimuli that can remove the source of aversive arousal or to stimuli that can reinforce positive arousal).

After paying attention to the event, the second step in the social learning process is retention. By remembering the observed act individuals are able to perform the event when the model is no longer present (delayed modeling). Retention of the act is facilitated by representing the response patterns in symbolic form. We represent the act in our minds and when the opportunity to perform the act comes we are able to retrieve the representation. "In social learning theory observers function as active agents who transform, classify, and organize modeling stimuli into easily remembered schemes rather than as quiescent cameras or tape recorders that simply store isomorphic representations of modeled events" (Bandura, 1971, p. 21).

There are two systems of representation of the response patterns: Imaginal representation of the modeled act or event, and verbal representation. Imaginal representation is also referred to as visual imagery. We draw a mental picture of the observed act and we store that picture in our memories. When we hear a reference to that act vivid imaginal representations of the absent stimuli are immediately elicited.

The second representational system involves verbal coding of observed events, and it accounts for the notable speed of observational learning and for the long-term retention of modeled contents by humans. Our ability to symbolically represent an event using a common language is the key to verbal representation. We use verbal codes to

symbolize complex events. That way we simplify the process of information storage and retrieval.

An important substep in the retention process is "mental rehearsal". Observational learning is most accurate when we first cognitively organize the modeled behavior (using imaginal and verbal symbols) and we mentally rehearse it before we enact it overtly. Mental rehearsal increases proficiency and retention by allowing individuals to visualize themselves performing the appropriate behavior. This is specially important in occasions where the observationally learned behavior cannot be easily established by overt enactment because of either social prohibitions or lack of opportunity.

The third phase in the social learning process is behavioral enactment through motor reproduction processes using symbolic representations of modeled patterns to guide overt performances. Given the opportunity to actually reproduce an act previously observed, we go through the following steps: cognitive organization of the responses, initiation, monitoring, and refinement on the basis of informative feedback. We first remember the cognitive representation of the act and we then select which responses are to be enacted. Cognitive and motor skills in the individual affect the cognitive organization and initiation of the behavior (i.e. some people have better capabilities to learn by observation than others, and some have better muscle coordination than others). Once we select the response to be

modeled, accurate reproduction is achieved by trial and error. By monitoring ourselves (directly observing our performance or relying on information from others) we obtain the necessary feedback to correct for discrepancies between the observed act and our modeling of it.

The fourth step in Bandura's social learning model includes the motivations that dictate the probability that a learned behavior will be performed. We do not enact every thing we learn. The probability that we perform a given behavior depends on opportunity, motor reproduction processes, and motivation. Motivation to act depends on reinforcement. If an individual gets some pleasurable experience from performing a given behavior, the probability of such behavior becoming the individual's usual way of responding to the stimulus condition increases. Similarly, when a specific behavior is performed by a model with positive consequences it is likely that the behavior is adopted by the observer. Reinforcement can also result from the removal of some irritating or punishing situation.

Reinforcement variables have an effect not only over the overt performance of matching behavior, but they can also exert selective control over the types of modeled events to which people are most likely to attend, and can facilitate selective retention by activating deliberate coding and rehearsal of modeled behaviors that have functional value.

Although the adoption of modeled behavior is often deliberate, this condition is not indispensable. A very

important consideration to take into account when talking about the effects of TV content is that the acquisition of a response pattern through repeated reinforcement of the linkage between an specific stimulus and a response occurs even when the individual is not aware that he/she is learning that behavior. This concept is referred to as "operant" conditioning. Learning a behavior from a model can take place without planning or awareness (DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1989).

Reinforcements can be of three types. External reinforcements are rewards that the actor gets for performing the behavior. These "external" rewards exist outside of the actor and take the form of social approval, money, privileges, and the avoidance of punishment. According to Bandura, external reinforcements are not limited to the actual reward after performing the act. The probability that an act will be performed is also increased if we expect to be rewarded because we know the consequences of the act by prior experience or by observing others.

The second type of reinforcement is vicarious reinforcement. It occurs when we observe others being reinforced for performing certain behaviors. Studies have shown that models who are rewarded are more likely to be imitated than models who are not rewarded.

The third type of motivation is self-reinforcement. We are able to generate reinforcements within ourselves --like "self-satisfaction" and "inner peace"-- for performing

certain behaviors. If an act is self-reinforcing to the actor, he/she will model the act, and will enact it repeatedly.

Learning from TV Sex Content

How does Bandura's social learning model apply to the acquisition of new attitudes and behaviors from television sexual content? Taking as an example a female adolescent with low levels of "real life" sexual experiences who wants to learn how to be more effective in attracting her male classmates, the process would be as follows:

1) The young adolescent may not feel comfortable talking about this topic with her parents, or may be embarrassed to ask any other adult or even her peers. Consciously or unconsciously, she will turn to television in searching for responses to her questions.

2) She observes the flirting techniques of her favorite character in a TV series. The character's strategy is to get intimate with males in the first date to stimulate their interest and attract them into a second encounter.

3) The teenager identifies with the character. She sees the model as attractive and she thinks that the character is worthy of imitation. The adolescent wants to be like the model.

4) Consciously or unconsciously the observer believes that the behavior performed by the model will be functional if applied to her own situation. The adolescent believes that by imitating the TV character she will get a positive result.

5) When the adolescent is confronted with a possible date (stimulus situation), she remembers the actions of the model and reproduces the behavior.

6) As a consequence of performing the modeled behavior she experiences some reward, relief or satisfaction (for example, she gets a date, she feels more mature, she thinks her peers will admire her for getting a date). The link between the stimulus and the modeled response is thereby reinforced and it is likely that she will repeat the same patterns of behavior when exposed to a similar situation.

The behavior is then adopted as habitual, and positive attitudes towards it are elicited in the female adolescent. Due to the lack of alternative sources of information about sexual issues, the teenager will repeat that behavior which may not be considered socially as correct (getting physically intimate in the first date is contrary to traditional morals), or which may result in negative consequences for her (her male partner can interpret her behavior as a request to have intercourse and she can run into a situation that she is not prepared to handle). This kind of positive reinforcement of a behavior deemed "unacceptable" by some groups in society is the basis of the concern about the negative effects of adolescents' exposure to television sexual content.

Social learning theory has been widely applied to explain the acquisition of aggressive tendencies and behavior from exposure to television violence. Assuming that the learning mechanism is the same, some of the processes and effects of learning from TV violence can be applied to learning from TV sexual content.

The three main effects that can be hypothesized are information acquisition, disinhibition, and desensitization (Bandura, 1971; Tan, 1985; Bryant and Zillman, 1994). According to social learning theory we can learn new acts of violence by observing the violent acts performed on television or film. Under the same assumption we can learn new sexual attitudes and behaviors from television portrayals of sex. The observational learning can take place without overt performance of the model's responses during the acquisition phase, and without reinforcements administered to the model or to the observer. Moreover, the first appearance of the acquired response may be delayed for days, weeks or even months. The new responses are acquired by the viewer through symbolic processes during the period of exposure to the modeling stimuli, which is prior to overt responding or to the appearance of any reinforcing events.

The second prediction of social learning theory is that abstract modeling can disinhibit us from performing violent acts in real life. According to Bandura, "observers increase performance of formerly inhibited behavior after observing models engage in threatening or prohibited activities without

adverse consequences" (Bandura, 1971). Social norms, fear of punishment, and anxiety associated with violence usually inhibit us from acting aggressively or violently. But watching violence on television may undermine these personal inhibitions and legitimize the use of violence by the viewer in real life. Viewers may behave in a more aggressive manner after watching televised violence because the usual inhibitions are broken down by the model being reinforced for behaving violently, or by the violent act being justified.

Applying this perspective to TV sexual content it can as well be predicted that after viewing sex on TV viewers will be more likely to perform sexual behaviors. Reinforcement of the sexual behaviors shown on TV will undermine social sanctions that usually inhibit us from performing such behaviors. The viewers will then be reinforced to perform those activities in real life because the same sexual activities are legitimized or justified on TV.

Another effect of modeling is response facilitation. In this case, no new responses are acquired and disinhibition does not operate because the behavior exhibited by the model has a positive social sanction. Through response facilitation adolescent can be prompted to channel positive and healthy sexual behaviors (i.e., the use of condoms) by including these kind of behaviors on television programming they are exposed to.

A third prediction is that repeated exposure to TV or film violence can increase the likelihood that aggressive acts in real life will be tolerated or performed as a consequence of desensitization. Similarly, it can be hypothesized that viewers with higher levels of exposure to TV or filmed sexual content will perceive those behaviors as occurring more often in real life and will have more positive attitudes towards the acts and the participants. Viewers will be more tolerant with types of non-traditionally accepted sexual behaviors, and will be more likely to engage in those kinds of acts. Another side-effect of desensitization is that sexually oriented media may encourage people not to take sexual issues as seriously as they should.

Chapter 3

METHODS

*"When television is good, nothing is better.
But when television is bad, nothing is worse".*
Newton Minow

Rationale

What is the nature and amount of sexual content adolescents in Spain are exposed to when they watch television? In order to map out the varieties of sexual behavior patterns that Spanish television offers for potential adoption, a research project including a survey and a content analysis was designed.

Two factors make the present study different from any other conducted before in the area of TV sexual content and adolescents. First, the research presented in this paper is the first study aimed at a systematic analysis of sexual content on current entertainment television in Spain,

including both public and commercial networks. Second, the study focuses on a specific target audience and on the specific programs to which the group of interest is most exposed. Instead of analyzing all current television programming, the focus has been narrowed to those shows most viewed by a subgroup of teenagers; the programs they watch the most are the most likely to have a greater influence, if any, in adolescents' attitudes, opinions, and behaviors. Also, the time frame has been narrowed to the afternoon and night shows. After 12 noon is when adolescents are free from school and therefore have more time to spend watching television. It is expected that the TV programs that they watch the most are aired after noon on week days.

The analytic scheme used in this study has been used previously with substantial reliability. In order to improve validity, the content analysis is based on multiple episodes of individual television series, rather than a single example of each series.

To maintain consistency with the content analytic schemes used by Greenberg (1985 and 1994), this study (1) distinguishes between verbal references to sex and physical sexual activity, (2) includes some milder forms of sexual behavior, (3) excludes nonsexual behaviors, (4) looks at sex differences in characters' involvement in sexual acts and references, and (5) looks at the degree to which sexual incidents involve humor.

Research Questions

The goal of content analysis of media presentations is to reveal the varieties of behavior patterns that are available as models for potential adoption. Content analysis is, thus, a descriptive investigation of the stimulus side of the S-R (Stimulus-Response) process of acquisition of new response patterns.

The systematic description of media content, however, does not allow us to make any prediction about cause and effect or about how S (the stimulus) and R (the response attitudes, opinions, and behaviors) are actually linked. Content analysis does tell us about the forms of behavior widely portrayed in media content, but it does not tell us that those patterns of behavior will be widely adopted.

The purpose of the present study is, therefore, to identify the kinds of sexual activities portrayed on television programs most viewed by adolescents in Spain. Social learning theory will then provide the conditions under which teenagers may observe and adopt specific coping techniques to model the behavior patterns revealed by the content analysis.

The basic research questions this study is aimed to answer are:

- Q1: How much sex are adolescents in Spain exposed to when they watch their favorite television shows?

- Q2: What kinds of sexual content are portrayed on Spanish TV for teenagers to model from?
- Q3: Are there any differences between the domestic and the U.S. imported television programs most viewed by Spanish teenagers in terms of amount and kinds of sexual references?
- Q4: What is the level of explicitness (verbal vs. visual references) portrayed by the Spanish programs?
- Q5: Are adolescents in Spain exposed to more or less sexual activities in their television diet than American adolescents?

Taking into account the results of prior TV sex content analyses conducted in the U.S, the results from the present study are expected to match the following predictions:

- 1: An equal or higher overall number of sexual acts references including categories like prostitution and homosexuality.
- 2: Modest to large amounts of implied and verbal references to, and low frequencies of visual instances of sexual intercourse.
- 3: Persistent portrayals of premarital sex and marital infidelity with more sexual activities occurring between people not married to each other than between marital partners.
- 4: Prevalence of talking about sex over engaging in it.
- 5: Rare if any mentions of STDs, birth control, AIDs, abortion, and homosexuality.

- 6: Prevalence of humorous treatment of sexual issues.
- 7: Tendency to portray young participants in televised sexual acts, most likely under the age of 40.

Methodology

In order to narrow the focus of the study to those television programs most viewed by adolescents in Spain only soap operas and TV series from 12 p.m. to 1 a.m. were included in the first phase of the project which consisted on a survey. The survey was a five page questionnaire including a list of 4 soap operas and 29 TV series currently aired on both the public network (channels TVE-1 and TVE-2), and the commercial networks (Antena 3, Tele 5, Canal Plus) during the selected time period. Canal Plus is subscription based and the programs included in the sample from this channel pertain to the nonscrambled programming available to the general public.

In the survey, students were asked to identify their favorite afternoon soap operas and TV series. According to program periodicity, teenagers were asked to recall viewing of each show during the last week, the last two weeks, or the last month (Appendices A and B).

The survey was implemented in two high schools in the Madrid metropolitan area. Questionnaires were collected on late February, 1995 at "Instituto Marqués de Suanzes"

(medium-low SES), and at "IES. Valle Inclán" (medium-high SES). A total of 200 questionnaires were collected: 105 from "Instituto Marqués de Suanzes", and 95 from "IED. Valle Inclán".

Among the respondents 45% were males and 55% were females. The age of the respondents ranged from 13 to 18 years old. However, 60% of the sample fell between 15 and 16 years old. Fifty five per cent of the sample were 10th graders, and 45% were 9th graders.

The criteria used to select the programs were: shows viewed two or more times (for series aired once a week), and shows viewed three or more times (for series aired 2 to 7 times a week) by 30% or more of the sample.

None of the four afternoon soap operas in our sample reached the viewing frequency of the selection criteria (less than 14% viewing) (Table 5). Originally, the "top ten" series most viewed by adolescents in our sample were selected for videotaping (Table 6). However, one of the shows was a cartoon ("Los Simpson"), and two of the series were canceled when the videotaping phase was to begin. Therefore, the final sample was composed of the seven TV series preferred by teenagers.

Three of the series are U.S. productions: "Cosas de casa" (Family Matters), "Padres forzosos" (Full House), and "Salvados por la campana" (Saved by the Bell). The remaining four are Spanish productions: "Farmacia de guardia", "Canguros", "Hermanos de leche", "Quién da la vez".

Four hours of each show were videotaped during eight weeks of videotaping. Only one show, "Quién da la vez", consisted of one hour long episodes. The rest were 30 minute episodes. A total sample of 28 hours of programming was videotaped for content analysis purposes.

Content Coding

In order to allow for comparisons and to achieve consistency the content analytic scheme used in the present study was adopted from Greenberg and Busselle's study (1994) (originally used by Greenberg et al., 1993).

The unit of analysis was the sex act, defined as visual or verbal incidents or references to sexual activity within a scene. A scene was defined by occurring in a single locale with one set of characters present without interruption by change of locale, commercial break, or a change in characters. One or more codable sex acts or references could be contained in a single scene. Following this pattern each act was coded as either a visual portrayal of sexual activity, a verbal reference to sexual activity, or both.

A total of eight categories of sexual activity were possible: 1) prostitution, 2) rape, 3) homosexuality, 4) intercourse among individuals married to each other, 5) intercourse among participants not married to each other, 6)

petting, 7) long kisses, and 8) other. Sex acts categories were defined as follows:

Prostitution: any portrayal of pimps, solicitation, and the selling and buying of sex. Examples include a statement such as "she was a street walker" regarding a former prostitute, or a man receiving money for sexual services given to a woman.

Rape: a forced act of intercourse. It is usually accompanied by assault or threat, and can also include attempted or threatened rape. Examples are a husband who forces himself on his wife, or any reference made to past or future rapes.

Homosexuality: any expression of sexual behavior or intimate relationship between two people of the same sex, other than rape. Examples include references such as "he knows I'm gay", or one woman kissing another woman in the mouth.

Intercourse/married: an instance of implied or explicit intercourse between a wife and her husband. Examples are any references to getting pregnant, or any portrayal of a nude married couple in bed.

Intercourse/unmarried: heterosexual intercourse, implied or explicit, between partners not married to each other, including premarital and extramarital incidents, e.g., "they had an affair".

Petting: Sexually stimulating behavior --more intense than kissing, touching and simple hugging. Examples include a young boy and a girl lying on a couch in a passionate embrace, or a wife giving her husband a chest massage while kissing him.

Long kiss: an elongated/passionate kiss by itself that is judged as sexually stimulating (e.g., a long "French" kiss), excluding incidental kisses.

Other: any other behavior or reference to illegal or intimate sex activities that does not fit into the above categories. Examples are discussions of abortion, contraception and virginity, any mention or portrayal of masturbation, or any mention or portrayal of group sex.

Each of these activities was also coded when the reference was to rejecting the sexual activity, e.g., "I don't want to have sex with you", or "he didn't rape me".

A hierarchical order of coding was used. For example, if the intercourse occurred during rape, it was coded as rape and not coded a second time as intercourse. If a sex act was a long kiss, followed by intercourse/unmarried in the same scene, only the intercourse/unmarried was coded. A sex content coding form was used for each codable sex act (Appendix C).

When a visual sex act occurred its context characteristics were identified including act's length (in seconds); location of act (bar, bedroom, car, at work, restaurant, outdoors, living room, other); whether the act

was depicted in an serious or humorous context; whether there were any accompanying behaviors to the activity (such as drinking alcohol, eating, physical aggression, using drugs, smoking); whether there was background music during the act; and the position of the participants (standing, sitting, lying down, other).

For both verbal and visual references the time frame of the sex act was also coded. The time frame was defined as current if the act was happening in the scene being coded, i.e. "I want you now, baby"; past, when the reference was to incidents that preceded this scene or to a past incident, i.e. "We slept together last night"; future, when there was a verbal reference to an act that will happen or a discussion of a planned act, i.e. "We are going to make a baby", or "We're planning on sleeping together"; Fantasy/dream, including any verbal or visual reference to an act that one imagines or wishes would happen, i.e. "I wish I wasn't having an affair".

Information about the characters participating in the codable sex act was collected, such as marital relationship, gender, race, age, attitude toward act, initiator of the activity, presence in scene.

For those characters present in the scene but not directly involved in the sexual activity, but talking about it, their gender, age, race, and relationship to each of the sex act participants (i.e., friend, not friend, relative, lover, former lover, co-worker, spouse, and former spouse)

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were coded, together with their attitude toward the activity.

One male and one female university students, together with the researcher, participated in the coding process. A total of 20 hours of training were undertaken along nine sessions of two to four hours each. Videotaped soap opera episodes and films on video were used for training purposes.

Intercoder reliability was measured as the percent agreement among the three coders as well as the percent agreement among every two coders. The overall reliability in identifying scenes was .89, and the total agreement on context characteristics (including time frame) was always .89 or 1. For both participants' age and participants' marital relationship the agreement was .81. There were no disagreements on participants age within 5 years. The three coders reached an agreement of .73 when identifying the attitudes of the participants toward the act. There were no disagreements on sex and race for either participants and nonparticipants. For nonparticipants, all variables were reliable at $>.70$ (except for the relationship category of "friend" for which the agreement was .65).

For the final coding, coders worked in two person teams consisting on one male and one female. Both coders in each team were required to arrive at a single coding conclusion. Each team coded one third of the total sample. Episodes were alternatively assigned to each team so that the same team wouldn't code consecutive episodes. Due to videotaping schedule and overseas shipping of the materials from Spain,

the coding process took place in two phases: the first one from April 16 to April 27, 1995, the second one from July 8 to July 25, 1995.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

"Television is the literature of the illiterate, the culture of the low-brow, the wealth of the poor, the privilege of the underprivileged, the exclusive club of the excluded masses".

Lee Loevinger

Amount and Kinds of Sexual Activities

The first research question this study poses is: how much sex are adolescents in Spain exposed to when they watch their favorite television shows? A total of 197 sexual acts/references were found in this sampling of the television series most viewed by adolescents in Spain, involving 28 hours of TV. Overall, 7 sex acts were found per hour of television series. The averages in each individual series coded were (Table 7) 24.5 acts per hour in *Hermanos de leche*, 11 in *Quién da la vez*, 7 in *Canguros*, 3 in *Padres forzosos*, 2 in *Farmacia de guardia*, 1.75 in *Cosas de Casa*, and 0 in *Salvados por la campana*. The periodicity with which the shows

were aired varied from 1 to 7 seven times per week.

The second research question is: What kinds of sexual content are portrayed on Spanish television for teenagers to model? (Table 8) The most prominent sexual act referred to in the sample was intercourse which accounted for 65% of all the coded sexual activity. It occurred almost 5 times per hour. Unmarried intercourse (114 acts) was eight times as frequent as married intercourse (14) in this sampling. The second most frequent sexual activity was long kisses which occurred 21 times, averaging three acts every four hours. These two categories together, intercourse and long kiss, accounted for 76% of all identified sexual activity.

Petting (4.1%), rape (2.5%), prostitution (4.6%), and homosexuality (3%) were the least frequent coded activities. Despite their low frequency, it is important to note the presence of the rape, prostitution, and homosexuality categories in the sample. It is to be noted also that the third category in frequency was 'other' with a total of 20 instances which accounted for 10% of all acts coded (Table 9). Topics found in this category included infertility, birth control, pregnancy, illegitimate paternity/unknown paternity, references to genitalia, virility, virginity, surrogate mother, masturbation, and talking about having an orgasm. These results seem to indicate that the television series in the sample included a wider range of topics related to sexual activities when compared with results from prior studies in the literature review section of this paper.

Level of explicitness (visual versus verbal references) was the object of this study's fourth research question (Table 10). Among the 197 coded acts, only 28 had a visual component versus 185 instances of verbal references (16 instances were found where both visual depictions and verbal references occurred at the same time). According to these results, adolescents in Spain are exposed to a larger amount of verbal references to sex (7 per hour) than to visual acts (1 per hour) when they watch their favorite television series.

More than half of all verbal and visual acts (58%) were references to intercourse between unmarried partners. Only two visual acts were found for this category, whereas 117 of the references were coded under verbal activity. All 20 references coded in the 'other' category (any other sexual behavior or reference that may be considered intimate sex that does not fit into any other category, i.e. discussions of virginity, abortion, safe sex, contraception, pregnancy, etc.) were verbal instances. Viewers of the sample watched 17 instances of long kiss, and 8 of petting whereas they heard 11 references to the former category and 3 to the latter. Overall, the nature of the presentation of all the different behaviors coded (except for the long kiss and petting categories) was primarily through verbal exchanges. This indicates that people on television series talk about having sex (or about other people having sex), but are rarely viewed engaging in sex acts.

Across all acts, both participants were present most of the time (41%), and only one of them was present in another 37% of the sexual activity. For intercourse acts between unmarried partners, 37% of the times they were both present and at least one was present in an additional 38% of the acts. These figures confirm the earlier finding that most of the sexual activity in the television series analyzed consists on talking more than doing, and usually both or one of the participants are involved in the conversation.

Context of Sex Acts

What are the contextual attributes accompanying visual depictions of sexual activity on television series most viewed by adolescents in Spain? The average length of acts was 11 seconds. Sixty four percent of all acts lasted less than ten seconds, and only two acts were 55 seconds long. Sexual activity on the TV series analyzed occurred in relatively brief periods. The average set of acts per hour long episode would total slightly over one minute (77 seconds) of the total program time.

Most of the sexual activity occurred in the living room (56%). The bedroom and a variety of miscellaneous sites each accounted for 19% of the remaining locations. Almost 8% of the acts took place in bars.

Table 11 identifies the behaviors which accompanied visual displays of sexual activity in the sample. Alcohol consumption was found in 8% of the instances. Aggression, smoking, eating, and drug consumption were not present in the sample of series analyzed. In 37% of the incidents, background music accompanied the sexual behavior.

Standing was the most prevalent position for participants in sexual activities in 47% of the instances. Sitting and lying down each accounted for 30% of the remaining acts position.

Visual sexual activity in the TV series was judged as humorous 74% of the times, versus 26% which were judged as occurring in a serious context.

For both visual and verbal acts, the majority of the sexual activity referred to had occurred in the past (37%). In another 33%, the sexual activity was coded under the fantasy/dream category as a reference to an act that is wished or imagined to happen. Twenty four percent of the instances occurred in the present time, and 7% were references to future acts.

Sex Act Participants

In the vast majority of incidents, the sex acts involved two persons. Exceptions to this were references to masturbation, virginity, virility and genitalia involving only one participant, and one storyline in one episode of "Hermanos de leche" dealing with one surrogate mother carrying the egg provided by another woman and a man providing the sperm.

The marital relationships of the 387 sex act participants found in this sample are identified in Table 12. For all acts, the marital status of 33% of the participants was unknown to the coders. Twenty two per cent of the people engaged in sexual activity were not married to each other but had in the past been married to someone else (currently divorced, widowed, etc.). Nineteen per cent of the participants were not married to each other and their past marital status was unknown. Twelve per cent of the participants in sexual activity were married to someone else, and 7.5% were married to each other. Single/never married partners engaged in sexual activities accounted for almost 8% of the total participants.

For the most frequent category of sexual activity found in this sample, intercourse between unmarried partners, the marital status of near 26% of the participants was divorced/widowed (Table 12). Another 22% of the participants in this type of sexual activity were single with an unknown

past, and two per cent were single never married before (premarital sex). Participants married to someone else (marital infidelity) accounted for 16%.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Among participants in the sexual acts, 52% were males and 48% females.

By ethnicity, 85% of the people involved in sexual activity were white, and near 4% were African-American. Only two persons pertained to a different ethnic group, and in almost 11%, the race of the participants was unknown to the coders.

Across all acts, the largest group of participants in sexual acts was comprised by people in their 30s (44%). The second largest group was people in their 20s (22%). Teenagers comprised 2% of the sex incident participants, and in the rest of the acts (24%) the participants' ages ranged from 50 to 75 years old (Table 13).

Males 35 or younger accounted for 65% of the participants in sexual activity, compared to 71% of their females partners in that same age group. Most men involved in sex acts were 35 (46%) whereas most women were 25 (33%). On average, male participants (mean age of 41) were older than women (mean age of 36). Overall, the ages of the participants

ranged from 15 to 75 years old.

Looking at the main kind of sexual activity in which each age group is engaged, all six teenagers coded as participants appeared under the long kiss category. The majority of participants in the age range of 20 to 50 and 60 to 75 were engaged in unmarried intercourse. Partners between 55 to 60 years old participated mostly in married intercourse.

Attitudes of Participants

Half the sex acts participants held clearly positive attitudes toward what they were doing, while 17% were clearly negative. By gender, women (60% positive, 13% negative, and 26% neutral) were more positive than men (48% positive, 22% negative, and 29% neutral) ($p < .05$).

Given the number of incidents and participants in Unmarried/intercourse, participants in this category can be described separately. Among all unmarried people involved in intercourse (228) 51% were males and 49% were females. Almost 83% of the participants in this sexual activity were white and 4% African American (the ethnicity of 14% of the participants was unknown to the coders). The males were older than their female companions, 35% of the women and 7% of the men were 25 and under; 52% of the women and 88% of the men were 35 or over.

Looking at the attitudes toward the activity 45% of the male participants were positive compared to 55% of their female partners (Table 14). Twenty two per cent of the men had negative attitudes toward the act compared to 14% of the women. These results indicate that female participants in the sample analyzed had slightly more positive attitudes toward the sexual act than men. However, differences in attitudes between males and females were statistically not significant.

As for who initiated this sexual activity, over 60% of the time it was not able to be determined by the content available. When it was identifiable women (20%) were found to be the initiators more frequently than men (9%).

Non-Participants in Sex Acts

Individuals who were talking about someone else's sexual activity in their absence or in their presence, but who themselves were not engaged in that particular incident were categorized as Non-participants.

Among the total 271 non-participants found in this sample more were women (58%) than men (42%). This differs from the gender distribution for participants where more men than women were found. By race, 96% of all non-participants were white and 4% African-American.

The ages of these onlookers ranged from 10 to 65. Non-participant teenagers (8%) were a larger group than participants under 20. The majority of non-participants (38%) were in their 30s, 15% in their 20s, 11% in their 40s, 15% in their 50s, and 13% in their 60s.

Negative attitudes towards the act they were talking about were expressed by 35% of the non-participants, 31% were positive about the activity and 34% were neutral.

The relationships of the onlookers with the individuals directly participating in sexual acts also were examined. Forty six percent of the non-participants were coded as friends of the participants, and 12% as not friends. The category "relative" identified only 1% of the non-participants, and neither lovers or former lovers of the participants were found among the non-participants. Ten percent of the onlooker individuals were coworkers of the participants in sexual activity. In terms of marital relationship, 10% of the non-participants were spouses of the individuals been talked about, and 6% were former spouses.

Non-participants talked primarily about other unmarried people's intercourse (56%). The second main issue onlookers talked about were long kisses (11%) and intercourse between married partners (11%). Homosexuality (2%), rape (3%), prostitution (5%), and petting (3%) were the sexual activities they talked about the least.

Female non-participants (59%) talked about unmarried intercourse more than males (41%). Ninety nine per cent of

these women, and 92% of the men were white. Women in this group were younger than men ($p < .001$); 29% of the women and 11% of the men were 25 or under; 52% of the males were in their 30s compared to 27% of the women. In terms of attitude, more women (48%) than men (16%) were negative toward the activity they were talking about ($p < .001$). Thirty seven per cent of the men expressed positive attitudes compared to 25% of the women in the non-participants group (Table 14).

Domestic versus Imported TV Series

Are there any differences between the domestic and the U.S. imported television programs most viewed by Spaniard teenagers in terms of amount and kinds of sexual references (RQ#3)? As indicated in Table 15, 86% of all sexual activities coded in this sample of television series occurs in three of the Spanish series alone. The same three series (*Hermanos de leche*, *Canguros*, *Quién da la vez*) also account for 91% of all incidents of unmarried intercourse. The remaining domestic show, *Farmacia de guardia*, conveyed 4% of all sexual activity, and 5% of those incidents were sex acts between unmarried partners.

As for the U.S. imported series, *Padres forzosos* (*Full House*) accounted for 6% of all sexual incidents and *Cosas de casa* (*Family matters*) for 4% of the overall acts. *Salvados*

por la campana (Saved by the bell) was the only show in which no instances of sexual activity were found. Comparing the percentages of unmarried/intercourse acts, all the domestic shows portrayed more instances than the U.S. shows. Even when the U.S. shows accounted for some of the total sexual activities, only one of them, *Cosas de casa* showed a slight portion (4%) of the more frequent category of sexual behaviors found in this study, unmarried intercourse. Only one U.S. series (*Padres forzosos*, 6%), had a higher percentage of total acts than the Spanish show with the lowest value in this category (*Farmacia de guardia*, 4%). However, none of the behaviors coded from the U.S. show were instances of unmarried intercourse, whereas 6% of the acts occurring in the Spanish show were intercourse between unmarried partners.

Table 16 displays the amount of each kind of sexual activity encountered in each TV series. Instances pertaining to all eight categories of sexual activity coded in this sample were found in the Spanish shows, whereas the incidents found in the U.S. series clustered in only three of those categories. From the total of 19 sexual acts found in the U.S. series 74% fell into the long kiss category. Only one instance of petting was found, and the remaining four sexual behaviors coded from the U.S. series were intercourse between unmarried partners. No instances of illegal or deviant sexual behaviors (rape, prostitution, homosexuality) occurred in these imported series.

On average, when Spanish adolescents watch their favorite domestic television series they are exposed to 11 instances of eight possible kinds of sexual activity each hour compared to 1.6 instances per hour of three possible kinds when they watch their U.S imported ones.

Comparing Results

Are adolescents in Spain exposed to more or less sexual activities in their television diet than American adolescents (RQ#5)? In order to answer this question, results from the present study are compared with results from the 1985 study by Greenberg and his colleagues (Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman and Linsangan, 1993).

The 1985 study content analyzed 19 prime-time commercial network fictional television series viewed most often by a sample of ninth and tenth graders (mostly 14 and 15 years old). Table 17 shows the amount, rate, and kinds of sexual activity for both 1985 and 1995 studies. The 1985 sample consisted of three episodes of each of 19 prime-time TV series (40 hours); the 1995 study comprised four hours of each of seven TV series (28 hours).

A total of 117 sexual acts were identified in 1985 yielding an average of 2.95 per hour, compared to 197 acts in

1995 at an average of seven per hour of programming ($p < .001$). On both samples intercourse (45 acts in 1985; 128 acts in 1995) and long kisses (35 instances in 1985; 21 in 1995) were the predominant categories. Homosexuality was more frequent in 1985 (18 acts) than in 1995 (6 acts), as well as prostitution with 15 instances coded in 1985 and 9 in 1995. Two instances of rape were found in 1985 and five in 1995. Intercourse between married partners occurred seven times in 1985 compared to 14 times in 1995. Two instances of petting were found in the 1985 versus eight in 1995. No references to the 'other' category including issues like virginity, abortion, safe sex, contraception, pregnancy, etc. were reported in the 1985 study compared to 20 references in the 1995 sample.

As in 1995, most of the sexual activity found in 1985 was verbal references (63% in 1985, 94% in 1995). This means that most of the sex content to which adolescents in Spain and the U.S. are exposed when they watch their favorite TV series, consists of references from characters talking about other people's sexual behaviors rather than watching the sex act in progress.

Across all sexual acts, most of the participants in the U.S. sample (28%) were never married whereas the predominant identified marital status of the participants in the Spanish study was divorced or widowed (22%) (Table 18). Fewer partners in sexual activities were married to each other in 1995 (8%) than in 1985 (13%) ($p < .001$). The percentages of

participants married to someone else for both samples are similar, 11% in 1985 and 12% in 1995. This observation also applies to single participants whose past marital status is unknown which accounted for 16% in 1985 and 18% in 1995.

The 1995 study yielded significantly more acts of unmarried intercourse (4.10 per hour) than the 1985 study (.96 per hour) ($p < .001$). In this category, the largest percent of participants whose marital status was known in the Spanish sample were divorced or widowed (25%), whereas extramarital intercourse (between partners married to someone else) was more prevalent in the U.S. sample (21%). The second most frequent category in both samples was single/past unknown (20% in 1985, 22% in 1995). The 1985 sample included more instances of premarital sex between people never married (18%) than the 1995 sample (2%).

In the U.S. study, both participants were present in 65% of the sexual acts, whereas the two partners were present in 41% of the incidents in the Spanish study. At least one participant was present in 26% of the incidents in 1985, and 37% of the acts in 1995. More often in the Spanish study, the sexual activity was talking about sex with one of the participants. For acts of unmarried intercourse, both participants were present in 36% of the acts in the 1985 sample and at least one was present an additional 49% of the time. In the Spanish sample, both participants in unmarried intercourse were present in 37% of the acts, whereas only one was present 38% of the time. In both the Spanish and the U.S.

study, findings indicate that typically the sexual activity consisted of talking more than doing, and one of the participants in the sex reference was involved in the conversation.

As for the attitudes of the participants and nonparticipants in sexual activities (Table 19) participants in both samples (76% in 1985, 75% in 1995) held more positive attitudes across all acts ($p < .001$) than nonparticipants (24% in 1985, 47% in 1995). Furthermore, far more of the 1995's nonparticipants had positive attitudes toward all acts (47%) than in 1985 (24%) ($p < .001$). Although differences were not statistically significant, attitudes toward the most frequent category of sexual activity in both studies, intercourse between unmarried partners, follow the same trend with more positive attitudes among participants (52% in 1985, 74% in 1995) than nonparticipants (15% in 1985, 46% in 1995). Again, nonparticipants in 1995 (46%) were more positive towards unmarried intercourse than nonparticipants in 1985 (15%). For all the categories and for both Spanish and U.S. samples, nonparticipants were more critical toward sex activities whereas the majority of participants were clearly favorable.

Among the context features accompanying the sexual act, music in the background was the most prevalent in both decades (Table 20). Forty-eight per cent of the visual portrayals of sexual activity in 1985 and 37% of them in 1995 contained music. Only one other feature, drinking (8%), was present in the 1995 Spanish sample, whereas in the 1985 U.S.

sample, sex acts were accompanied by alcohol (14%), eating (19%), and aggression (5%).

The majority of the sexual activity found in the Spanish sample (74%) was judged as occurring in a humorous context. By contrast, in the 1985 sample, 27% of the total sex acts were cast in a humorous context, only in situation comedies. Whereas in 1985 most of the sexual activity occurred in bedrooms (45%), the main location for sexual encounters in 1995 moved to the living room (56%). Work (23%) and restaurants (19%) accounted for the remaining major locations of sexual activity in the U.S. sample compared to bedrooms (19%), a variety of miscellaneous sites (19%), and bars (8%) in the Spanish sample.

More acts in the U.S. sample happened in the present (43%) whereas the majority of the sex depicted in the Spanish sample was referred to as occurring in the past (37%). References to future sexual activity occurred 17% of the time in 1985 and 7% in 1995. There were no fantasy sequences in the 1985 study versus 33% of the acts coded in 1995 under the fantasy/dream category, defined as verbal or visual references to an act that is wished to happen.

Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusions

*"Television is not the truth. Television is a god-damned amusement park.
Television is a circus, a carnival, a traveling troupe of acrobats,
storytellers, dancers, singers, jugglers, sideshow freaks,
lion tamers and football players"*
Paddy Chayefsky

How do this study's results match predictions made in Chapter 3 based on the literature review of prior television sex content analyses? A summary of the findings is in Figure 4.

Comparing this study's overall per-hour rate of 7 acts with prior studies conducted between 1976 and 1978 using the same or similar coding schemes, the present rate is three to seven times higher (Fernandez-Collado, Greenberg, Korzenny, and Atkin, 1978; Greenberg, Graef, Fernandez-Collado, Korzenny, and Atkin, 1980); and almost three times higher than 1985 data (Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman, and Linsangan, 1993) (prediction 1).

This difference in the amount of sexual acts references responds to three possible explanations: there is more sex in the television series in general; there is more sex in the TV series that Spanish teenagers prefer to watch; there is more sex on a regular basis in Spanish television programming.

Specifically for the so called deviant or illegal sexual behaviors --homosexuality, rape, and prostitution-- despite their low frequency of appearance, their presence in the Spanish sample is to be noted. All the references to these particular sexual behaviors are found only in the Spanish productions.

When considering the magnitude of viewing or listening to sexual references on television, the total viewing experience translates into large numbers of sex acts/references. Estimating that young adolescents' total TV series viewing is one hour per evening on weekdays and two hours on weekends (which are low estimates for the age group of interest), and multiplying that viewing time, nine hours, by the rate of seven acts per hour equals 63 acts per week. The final projected figure for the amount of sex acts/references that Spanish adolescents witness on TV in a year is a minimum of 3,276. If one calculate total exposure to sexual references based on weekly viewing of all episodes of their favorite series, then teenagers watch 12 hours of television instead of nine per week. Multiplying these 12 hours by an average of seven acts per hour equals 84 acts per week. The total figure at the end of one year is 4,368

acts/references to sexual activity. Whichever figure is chosen, this amount accounts only for their favorite television series. The rest of their TV consumption including movies, commercials, soap operas and other types of programming likely to portray sexual content needs to be added.

The findings of the present study are consistent with prior content analyses in that no mentions of sexually transmitted diseases, abortion or AIDs were found in the sample (prediction 5). There were two references to birth control and one to pregnancy. Although the three were presented in a humorous context, they provided a minimum message about the consequences of sex and the risk of pregnancy.

From the results obtained, it is concluded that talking about sex is more prevalent than engaging in it (prediction 4), as confirmed by the large amounts of verbal references (185) and low frequencies of visual instances (28) of sexual activities. For the most frequent category, intercourse between unmarried partners, two depictions out of 119 were visual portrayals of that behavior. The conclusion that follows these findings is that adolescents in Spain are exposed to large amounts of references to sexual intercourse when they watch their favorite TV series, but they rarely see the behavior performed (Prediction 2). This means that, according to the "social learning theory", adolescents may not learn actual sexual behaviors from observations of those

behaviors on TV; they rather learn attitudes, values, moral judgments, self-perceptions and social reality perceptions regarding sex from these vicarious TV models.

This study confirms the trend toward persistent portrayals of marital infidelity, and premarital sex with more sexual activities occurring between people not married to each other than between marital partners (prediction 3). Unmarried intercourse was eight times more frequent than married intercourse in this sample. Premarital sex -- including premarital sex between single partners never married before, and single partners whose past is unknown-- is the second most prevalent activity in the 1995 study. For the unmarried intercourse category, the majority of the participants were divorced or widowed, and second in frequency were single partners.

Humorous treatment of sexual issues prevailed in the television series analyzed (prediction 6). This suggests that the message that teenagers are getting from entertainment television is that sex is a fun activity, free of any negative psychological or physical consequences.

Results from the present study confirm the tendency to portray young participants in televised sexual acts, most likely under the age of 40 (Prediction 7). The majority of the male participants in the 1995 study were 35 years old, and the majority of women were 25. This finding supports the traditional stereotype of older men dating younger women. However, the Spanish series portray female characters as

initiators of the most frequent sexual activity, unmarried intercourse, more often than males. This indicates that female characters are beginning to be portrayed in a more active role in sexual activities, instead of as objects and mere recipients of the males' sexual innuendo.

Overall, teenagers in Spain receive a mixed message from their entertainment programming regarding sexual behavior. Despite the high amount of sex they are exposed to, it is not presented consistently in a positive manner. Viewers receive positive evaluations from the participants. Nonparticipants, on the other hand, are mostly negative in their evaluation of sexual behaviors. It remains an open question how this affects adolescents' personal preferences, expectations or actions.

According to Bandura's modeling perspective (Bandura, 1977), in the absence of other sources of information about how to evaluate different sexual behaviors, youngsters adapt the moral judgments and social sanctions they observe from TV models to form their own opinions, attitudes, and expectations about sex in real life. Through symbolic modeling, model's judgments influence the development of adolescent's moral judgments by what is portrayed as acceptable or unacceptable conduct and the sanctions and justifications applied to it. From the results of this study it can be proposed that those who are more predisposed to imitate the behaviors they watch on TV series will find the arguments to justify their positive position; and those who

are less likely to imitate TV models, or who hold more negative attitudes toward sex will also find reinforcement for their position.

The vast majority of the sexual acts (178) in the 1995 sample appeared in the domestic programs rather than in the series imported from the U.S. (19). The Spanish programming contained more varied sexual activity than the U.S. series. Domestic series featured unmarried intercourse, married intercourse, long kisses, prostitution, petting, homosexuality, rape, and a miscellaneous of other sexual behaviors. U.S. series featured unmarried intercourse, long kisses, and petting.

Supporting this conclusion are the 20 instances of sexual activity found in the "other" category, including discussions about unknown paternity, virginity, virility, genitalia, orgasms, birth control, infertility, pregnancy, masturbation, and one case of a surrogate mother. None of these issues appeared in the U.S. series in the 1995 sample. Neither were they mentioned in the 1985 sample of prime-time North American TV series. The conclusion is that Spanish adolescent are not only exposed to a larger amount of sexual activity when they watch their favorite TV series, but they are exposed to a larger variety of sexual practices available for teenagers to model from.

The Typical Portrayal

What, then, is the typical sexual activity available for modeling in the Spanish television series?

Usually both or at least one of the participants is present in the scene talking about a past sexual experience primarily with friends and less frequently with coworkers. More than half the time the references are about intercourse between people not married to each other. Next, they talk about intercourse between married couples.

Typically, participants in television series' sexual activity are white men and women who are not currently married to each other but had been married to someone else in the past, and whose average age is 39. Women were the initiators of the behavior more often than men. Both men's and women's attitudes toward the activity were clearly positive.

Individuals talking about someone else's sexual activity were generally white females in their late 20s. They expressed negative attitudes toward the activity they were talking about which, more than half the time, was other unmarried people's intercourse.

The modal visual depiction of sexual activity consisted of a short scene, usually less than ten seconds, in which two people were in the living room kissing each other in a long, passionate kiss, and in an humorous context, with music playing in the background.

Potential Effects

What consequences can be inferred from these conclusions? According to prior research, the following potential effects can be expected from the amount and kinds of sex to which young adolescent are exposed when they watch their favorite TV series:

1- In the absence of alternative or competing sources of information about sex --parents, teachers, church-- adolescents may turn to mass media, especially television, for information about the norms of dating behavior and to learn how to interact with the opposite sex (Roberts, 1993; Gerson, 1966).

2- It is expected that, because teenagers see more of it and hear more about it, as they mature physically sex becomes more important in their hierarchy of things to think about and to talk about (Brown and Newcomer, 1991).

3- Due to the large amount of sexual references they are exposed to, adolescents may think that sex in various forms happens more often, and it is something normal in society (Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman and Linsangan, 1994).

4- Adolescent more regularly exposed to these vicarious sex experiences may also think that they know more about sex, and they are better able to counsel others about romance, love, and sex (Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman and Linsangan, 1994).

5- Given that characters on teenagers' favorite TV series primarily talk about sex rather than do it, it can be predicted that more heavy viewers of these programs will be more likely to communicate with others about sexual issues (Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman, and Linsangan, 1993). Television programming may function as an stimulator of communication and discussion about sexuality, which will no longer be a "taboo" topic for adolescents.

6- As a consequence of the consistent portrayal of divorce, deceit, cheating, and "fooling around" on entertainment television teenagers may also think that these are prevalent behaviors in the "real world" (Buerkel-Rothfuss and Mayes, 1981). Their attitudes toward those kinds of behaviors, socially considered as inadvisable and improper, may become more "liberal" and less sanctioning.

7- The absence of verbal references or visual depictions of the negative and unhealthy consequences of irresponsible sexual behaviors on television programming may have an influence on adolescents' evaluations of risky behaviors. According to Klein and his colleagues (1993, p. 29), "media content also may directly influence risk perception, because media protagonists seldom suffer adverse consequences of their behaviors despite their grossly distorted experience with violence, illness, or crime".

Why can television become such an important source of influence about sexuality on adolescents? As stated in Chapter 2, the first reason is the lack of other sources of

information and consultation about sexual matters. A second powerful reason is that teenage years are a formative period in which girls' and boys' expectations for "what ought to be" are rather vague and more malleable. Even when television may not play a dominant role in determining what is wrong and what is right, the medium is a readily available consultant for young adolescents for more hours a day than parents or friends. As a result, it is likely that television contributes to some extent to moral judgment development in at least some areas. This assumption is especially applicable to those areas about which teenagers are eager to know more, about which they have limited or no personal experiences, and about which parents or adults in general are reluctant to talk. One of the biggest such areas is sex (Bryant and Rockwell, 1994).

Together with the consistency of sexual messages portrayed on TV programming, several other factors contribute to making television an influential source on adolescents' evaluations about sex: most of the programming that teenagers watch is adult in nature; adolescents have limited access to countervailing views; and such TV programming is presented in a very realistic way (Roberts, 1982). Sexual media content may be a misleading influence for young adolescents. Given their lack of experience dealing with sexual issues in other contexts, teenagers may not be prepared to interpret televised sex in a cognitively or morally mature way (Brown, Childers, and Waszak, 1990).

Suggestions for Future Research

Modeling theory relies on content analysis to reveal the varieties of behavior patterns that are available as models for potential adoption. Therefore, although existing literature is abundant in content analysis studies of sexual messages on television programming, descriptive studies are a continuing need in order to be able to monitor any changes in the amount and kinds of sex provided by this medium.

Since evidence shows that the sexual content to which adolescents are exposed in their daily TV diet is mostly verbal rather than visual, further efforts should be made to analyze more deeply the nature of references to sex. Analyses should include detailed descriptions not only of instances when somebody is talking about someone else's sexual activities but also of any general reference to sexuality, like conversations about genitalia and physical or psychological processes, reactions to, or consequences of sex.

Furthermore, sexuality on television is a broad topic not narrowed to suggestive and erotic behavior. Gender roles, intimacy and affection, marriage and family, and standards of sexual attractiveness are part of the sexuality portrayed on TV, and should be accounted for when describing televised sexual content.

More qualitative analysis of context and consequences of sex on television is also needed. In order to convey a fuller

meaning of the portrayal, it is necessary to go beyond the counting of incidents of particular activities. For example all instances of extramarital intercourse have the same weight when we determine the amount of that activity in a given sample of programs. However, a three seconds visual scene of the participants in bed may have a different impact on the adolescent audience than a one minute conversation that yields a negative social reaction to it. The latter may be more relevant to teenagers who may find social rejection more threatening than the risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (Brown et al., 1990).

Other aspects of the context of the sexual material presented on television which may influence the effect of such content on the members of the audience also should be considered: The degree of seriousness or playfulness of the presentation; to what extent it lacks any artistic worth and literary or didactic intentions; the relation and integration of sex to the overall plot; the degree of explicitness; the cultural context; and if sex is used as a tool to shock the audience or if it appears as an expected outcome (Harris, 1994).

It will be interesting as well, to go beyond the sex act itself and to know about the motives and the consequences of the sexual behaviors presented on television: i.e., do the characters express the motives leading to the sexual behavior -- money, love, revenge...? What are the evaluations of the sexual incident before and after it takes place?

The relative importance of the characters for the viewer may also affect the potential impact of the content being watched. If the sexual act is performed by the favorite character of the teenager it may have a stronger impact on him/her than if the behavior is performed by another less relevant character.

Since descriptive studies can not answer causal questions, alternative research is needed to determine the correlation between exposure to televised sexual content and adolescents' attitudes, values, opinions and behavior regarding sex. Longitudinal designs using sexual beliefs, attitudes, and behavior as dependent variables would be the ideal tool to address questions about causes and effects.

The fact that various forms of sexual behavior are widely portrayed in media content does not mean that those behaviors will be widely adopted by the viewers. Because every person is different, and everyone interprets life experiences and observed events differently, it is important to know how adolescents interpret televised sexual content in order to understand what further uses they make of it. It is necessary to study to what extent other factors in the lives of teenagers modify the effects of the sexual content they watch on television. These factors are also important because, given multiple images and ideals for adolescents to model from, they determine which models adolescents will choose. Gender, age, social class and family configuration are some of the variables mediating the way adolescents

select, interpret and use TV sexual content.

Among the characteristics of the young adolescent, other factors to take into account are intelligence, education, self-esteem, and active cognition levels. Adolescents with higher levels of intelligence are expected to be less susceptible to TV influences because they are expected to be better able to distinguish between reality and television fantasy. Adolescents with higher levels of educational aspirations are also expected to be more motivated to restrain themselves from engaging in risky behaviors, and to be more aware of the negative consequences of sex, such as diseases or unwanted pregnancies, which could ruin their educational plans. As for self-esteem, it is expected that teenagers with higher levels are less likely to be influenced by television sexual content (Peterson et al., 1991). How cognitively active the adolescent is in seeking, selecting, receiving, perceiving, processing, and interpreting television's messages help determine any potential effects of those messages on the audience. The assumption is that adolescents with an active viewing style will demonstrate more critical media consumption and will be more resistant to attitude or behavioral change (Bryant and Rockwell, 1994).

Characteristics of the adolescent's familiar environment, specifically their relationship with parents, are another group of relevant variables mediating television's influence. Higher levels of parental co-viewing, more open family communication style, stricter parental rules

about television viewing and less liberal or permissive attitudes of parents toward sexual issues are expected to lessen the influence of television sexual content on adolescents (Peterson et al., 1991; Bryant and Rockwell, 1994).

Finally, more research is needed to explain the differences in amount and kinds of sexual models in different countries. How do differences in morals standards and social values in different cultures translate into differences in television sexual content, and differences in the effect of that content on their youth? What are the consequences of modeling from U.S television portrayals of adolescence for teenagers living in a different culture and a different society?

Now that we know that youngsters in Spain are exposed to a significant amount of sex on TV, the next step would be to investigate to what extent that exposure makes a difference in their lives.

TABLES

Table 1

Proportion of Adolescents and Average Time Dedicated to Watch TV, by Age.

	Total (1200)	15-19 (467)	20-24 (416)	25-29 (317)
Adolescents daily TV viewers (%)	96	97	94	96
Average daily time with TV (minutes)	129	139	126	119

Source: Youth Institute, Oct./Nov. 1992

Table 2

Television Audience February-April 1992 (percentages)

(Base: 14.762)	%
Total	91
14-19	92
20-24	88
25-34	89
35-44	89
45-54	92
55-64	92
65 +	94

Source: Encuesta General de Medios. 1st wave (AIMC)

Table 3

Agreement with the Statement: "I Like Watching TV, I Like It Very Much,
I Always Watch It" (vertical percentages)

	Total (1200)		15-19 (467)		20-24 (416)		25-29 (317)	
Very much	20	} 49,6	25	} 60,7	17,9	} 43,6	15,3	} 41,1
Some	29,6		35,7		25,7		25,8	
Little	31,2	} 49,4	24,8	} 38,5	32,1	} 55,2	39,4	} 57,9
At all	18,2		13,7		23,1		18,5	
Don't know	0,5		0,8		0,5		—	
Don't answer	0,5		—		0,7		1,0	

Source: Youth Institute, Oct./Nov.1992

Table 4

Agreement with the Statement: "I Usually Watch the TV Programs that the
Others Also Watch" (vertical percentages)

	Total (1,200)		Male (560)		Female (640)	
Very much	23,4	} 55	20,4	} 51	26,1	} 58
Some	31,4		30,9		31,9	
Little	22,1	} 44	21,8	} 47	22,5	} 41
At all	21,7		25,3		18,5	
Don't know	0,4		0,4		0,4	
Don't answer	1,0		1,4		0,6	

Source: Youth Institute, Oct./Nov. 1992

Table 5

Soap Opera Viewing Frequencies

Soap operas	Episodes per week	% Viewing
"El Desprecio"	5	10.6
"Corazón salvaje"	5	11.6
"Marielena"	5	13.1
"Milagros"	5	3

Table 6

TV Series Viewing Frequencies

TV series	Episodes per week	% Viewing
"Farmacia de guardia"	2	76.4
"Cosas de casa"	7	61.5
"Canguros"	1	54.5
"Hermanos de leche"	1	47.2
"Los Simpson"	5	45.7
"Padres forzosos"	4	44.4
"Salvados por la campana"	7	39.3
"Quién da la vez" †	1	39.2
"Compuesta y sin novio" *	1	36.4
"V" *	5	33
"Tarzán"	5	19.8
"Villarriba y Villabajo"	1	15.5
"Se ha escrito un crimen"	1	15
"Macgyver"	1	15
"Power Rangers"	5	15
"El coche fantástico"	5	14.5
"La mujer de tu vida"	1	9.7

* Cancelled before videotaping

† One hour long episodes

Table 7

Sexual Acts Per Hour on the TV Series

TV Series (Times per week)	$\bar{x}$ hour	# of acts (n=197)	% of total acts
Farmacia de guardia (2)	2	8	4
Cosas de casa (7)	1.75	7	4
Canguros (1)	7	28	14
Hermanos de leche (1)	24.5	98	50
Padres forzosos (4)	3	12	6
Salvados por la campana (7)	0	0	0
Quién da la vez (1)*	11	44	22

* One hour long episode

Table 8

Sexual Behaviors on the Series

Acts	$\bar{x}$ hour	# of acts (n=197)	% of total acts
Intercourse/unmarried	4.1	114	57.9
Long kiss	0.75	21	10.7
Other	0.72	20	10.2
Intercourse/married	0.5	14	7.1
Prostitution	0.33	9	4.6
Petting	0.29	8	4.1
Homosexuality	0.22	6	3
Rape	0.18	5	2.5

Table 9

'Other' Sexual Activities Referred to on the TV Series

Issues	# of references
Unknown paternity	6
Virginity	2
Virility	2
Genitalia	2
Orgasm	2
Birth control	2
Infertility	1
Pregnancy	1
Masturbation	1
Surrogate mother	1
TOTAL	20

Table 10

Verbal Versus Visual Sex Acts

Acts	# Visual acts (n=28)	# Verbal acts (n=185)
Intercourse/unmarried	2	117
Long kiss	17	11
Other	0	20
Intercourse/married	0	14
Petting	8	3
Prostitution	1	9
Homosexuality	0	6
Rape	0	5

Table 11

Behaviors Accompanying Sexual Activities

Attribute	% of visual acts
Music	37
Alcohol	8
Eating	0
Aggression	0
Drugs	0
Smoking	0

Table 12

Marital Relationship of Sex Act Participants

	Married to each other	Married to someone else	Never married	Divorced/widowed	Single/past unknown	Status unknown
All acts	7.5%	11.8%	7.8%	22.1%	18.4%	32.5%
Unmarried intercourse	0*	15.7%	2%	25.4%	21.8%	35%

* Cell empty by definition

Table 13

Age of Sex Acts Participants

Age	% all participants (n=394)
15	1.9
20-25	21.7
30-35	44.1
40-45	8.3
50-55	10.9
60-65	4.5
70-75	8.6

Table 14

Attitudes of Participants and Nonparticipants toward Unmarried Intercourse

	Participants (%)		Non-participants (%)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Positive	45	55	37	25
Negative	22	14	16	48
Neutral	34	31	48	27

* Totals above 100 due to rounding error

Participants: $\chi^2 = 3.12$, df=2, ns

Nonparticipants: $\chi^2 = 17.29$, df=2, p=.001

Table 15

Sexual Content in Domestic versus Imported TV Series

	% All Sex Acts	% Unmarried/intercourse
<u>Spanish Series</u>		
Hermanos de leche	50	54
Quién da la vez	22	24
Canguros	14	13
Farmacia de guardia	4	5
	(n=178)	(n=110)
<u>U.S. Series</u>		
Padres forzosos	6	0
Cosas de casa	4	4
Salvados por la campana	0	0
	(n=19)	(n=4)

Table 16

Kinds of Sexual Activity by TV Series (# of acts)

Spanish Series (n=178)					U.S. Series (n=19)		
	Hermanos de leche	Quién da la vez	Canguros	Farmacia de guardia	Padres forzosos	Cosas de casa	Salvados por la campana
Intercourse /unmarried	62	27	15	6	0	4	0
Long kiss	4	1	2	0	12	2	0
Other	9	8	3	0	0	0	0
Intercourse /married	4	7	2	1	0	0	0
Prostitut.	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Petting	4	0	3	0	0	1	0
Homosex.	3	1	1	1	0	0	0
Rape	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	98	44	28	8	12	7	0

Table 17

Sexual Behaviors on TV Fictional Series

Acts	$\bar{x}$ hour		# of visual acts	
	1985 U.S	1995 Spain	1985 U.S	1995 Spain
Unmarried/Intercourse	.96	4.10	8	2
Long Kiss	.89	.75	30	17
Homosexuality	.47	.22	1	0
Prostitution	.38	.33	0	1
Married/Intercourse	.18	.50	1	0
Rape	.06	.18	1	0
Petting	.04	.29	2	8
Other	0	.72	0	0
TOTAL	2.95 (n=117)	7.00 (n=197)	43 (n=117)	28 (n=197)

1985 frequency distribution of sexual behaviors is different from 1995 distribution

($\chi^2 = 59.05$, $df=7$, $p<.001$)

1985 frequency distribution of visual acts is different from 1995 distribution ($\chi^2 = 8.58$, $df=3$, $p<.05$). Due to the low frequencies of visual acts obtained, the original categories have been collapsed into Intercourse (unmarried/intercourse and married/intercourse), Long kisses, Deviant sexual behavior (homosexuality, prostitution, rape) and Other (petting and other).

Table 18

Participants in TV Sexual Content

All acts (%)			Unmarried/Intercourse (%)	
Marital status	1985 (n=234)	1995 (n=348)	1985 (n=38)	1995 (n=197)
Married to each other	13	8	0*	0*
Married to someo. else	11	12	21	16
Divorced/widowed	9	22	9	25
Never married	28	8	18	2
Single/past unknown	16	18	20	22
Status unknown	23	33	32	35

* Cell empty by definition

1985 frequency distribution of participants' marital status across all acts is different from 1995 distribution ($\chi^2=60.04$, $df=5$, $p=.001$)

1985 frequency distribution of participants' marital status for Unmarried/Intercourse is different from 1995 distribution ($\chi^2=21.06$, $df=4$, $p=.001$)

Table 19

Positive Attitudes of Participants and Nonparticipants in Sexual Activities

All acts			Unmarried/Intercourse	
	1985	1995	1985	1995
Participants % Positive	76	75	52	74
Nonparticipants % Positive	24	47	15	46

1985 frequency distribution of participants and nonparticipants' positive attitudes toward all acts is different from 1995 ($\chi^2 = 15.71$, $df=1$, $p<.001$)

1985 frequency distribution of participants and nonparticipants' positive attitudes toward Unmarried/Intercourse is different from 1995 ($\chi^2 = 1.15$, $df=1$, ns)

Table 20

Context of Visual Sex Acts

Attribute	% of visual acts 1985	% of visual acts 1995
Music	48	37
Alcohol	14	8
Eating	19	0
Aggression	5	0
Drugs	0	0
Smoking	0	0

FIGURES

Figure 1

Processes Governing Modeling in the Social Learning Theory
Adapted from Bandura (1977)

	Attentional Processes	Retention Processes	Motor Reproduction Processes	Motivational Processes	
	<i>Modeling stimuli</i>	<i>Symbolic coding</i>	<i>Physical capabilities</i>	<i>External reinforcement</i>	
M o d e l e d -> E v e n t s	Distinctiveness	Cognitive organization	Availability of component responses	Vicarious reinforcement	M a t c h i n g -> P e r f o r m a n c e
	Affective valence	Symbolic rehearsal	Self-observ. reproduction	Self-reinforcement	
	Complexity	Motor rehearsal	Accuracy feedback		
	Prevalence				
	Functional value				
	Observer characteristics				
	Sensory capacities				
	Arousal level				
	Perceptual set				
	Past reinforc.				

Figure 2

Content Analyses of Sexual Behaviors/References on Prime-Time Television

Study	Categories	Major Findings
Franzblau, Sprafkin, and Rubinstein (1977) <u>Sample</u> 50 hours of TV programming, from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., during one week in 1975 <u>Purpose</u> To tabulate explicitly portrayed, implied or alluded-to sexual acts	13 categories of physical intimacy ranging from intimate behaviors (e.g., intercourse) to casual behaviors (e.g., kissing, embracing) and verbalizations (e.g., innuendo) rape, prostitution, intercourse	- Only 2 acts of implied heterosexual intercourse were reported, and no incidents of homosexual activity were coded - The sexual behaviors most frequently found were kissing, embracing, flirting, partner-seeking, and non aggressive touching - Physically intimate behaviors were shown more frequently during the Family Viewing Time (8-9 p.m. time period) than during the Post-FVT (9 to 11 p.m.) - Physically intimate behaviors and references appeared most frequently on humorous programs, namely situation comedies and variety shows
- Fernandez-Collado, Greenberg, Korzenny, and Atkin (1978) - 77 programs; 58 hours of 1976-1977 prime-time and Saturday morn. - Amount of drug use and sexual intimacy; Analysis of shows heavily viewed by children	- Rape, homosexual acts, intercourse/unmarried, intercourse/married, prostitution, other	- The sample yielded a total of 1.72 incidents of sexual activity per hour - By program type, the continuing story relates the most sexual content (3 acts per hour) followed by crime shows and situation comedies (both averaging 1.5 acts per hour) - Intimate sexual acts, both implied and explicit, occur on commercial TV at the rate of just under two per hour - The predominant act presented is sexual intercourse between heterosexuals unmarried to each other; the second most frequent act is prostitution. These two categories accounted for 69% of all coded behaviors - In the shows children watch most, the major intimate behavior presented is intercourse between unmarried - Deviancy -homosexuality and rape- occurs very little

Figure 2 (cont'd)

- Silverman, Sprafkin, Rubinstein (Winter, 1979) - 64 programs of 1977-78's prime-time season (8-11 p.m; ABC, CBS, NBC) - Kinds and amount of physically intimate and sexual behaviors that are dealt with on prime-time TV	- Nonsexual interpersonal touching - Affectionate displays - Sexual behaviors and references - Atypical sexual behaviors - Mode of presentation - Sex and race of participants	- Flirtatious behaviors (physical suggestiveness) quadrupled in frequency from 1975 (Franzblau et al., 1977) - Sexual innuendos increased more than five-fold from the 1975 analysis - Sexual intercourse was never contextually implied in the 1975 program sample. In the 1977 sample such cues appeared 15 times - No overt physical portrayals of intercourse were witnessed - Like in the 1975 study, humorous programs, namely situation comedies and variety shows, contained most of the physical suggestiveness and sexual innuendos - Sex-role stereotyping evidence: In 1977 females were more likely to act seductively, while males were more likely to be aggressive
- Greenberg, Graef, Fernandez-Collado, Korzenny, and Atkin (1980) - Two sample weeks from each fall 1977 (48.5 hours), and summer 1978 (56 hours) - Incidence of explicit and implicit acts of, and references to intimate sexual behaviors; Longitudinal comparison with the 1978 study by Fernandez-Collado et al.	- Intimate sexual behavior: Rape, homosexual acts, intercourse/ married, intercourse/ unmarried, prostitution, other (petting, pornography...)	- Each successive sample showed a drop in the available rate of intimate sexual references: 2.22 acts p/h in 1976, to 1.35 in 1977, and 1.04 in 1978 - The most prevalent sexual references were to intercourse among nonmarried partners - Instances of rape and homosexuality were uniformly low - Women were as likely as men to participate both in initiating and receiving roles - Concentration of intimate sex in the young-adult and mid-adult years. 75% of all acts occurred among participants in ages 20 to 49 - Although the higher rates of the first sample, 1976, were not maintained, certain intimate sexual acts occurred regularly in the evening in 1977-78, and much higher rates than reported by Franzblau et her colleagues (1977)

Figure 2 (cont'd)

- Sprafkin and Silverman (1981) - Comparison of physically intimate and sexual behavior portrayed on 1975, 1977 and 1978-79, seasons of prime-time TV. - 68 programs from the three major commercial networks, ABC, NBC, CBS, between 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. during a two week period in 1978	- 12 categories of physically intimate and sexual behavior ranging from nonsexual interpersonal touching, to affectionate displays, to typical sexual behaviors and references. - New category: Sex education and romance. - 11 categories of discouraged sexual practices	- Verbal presentations of intercourse increased from .04 acts per hour in 1975, to .10 acts in 1977, and .90 in 1978. - Sexual innuendos increased from about 1 reference per hour in 1975, to 7 in 1977, and to almost 11 in 1978. - Both contextually implied intercourse and direct verbal references to intercourse tended to occur during the programs aired after 9 p.m. - Allusions to prostitution increased more than four-fold, and allusions to aggressive sexual contacts increased three-fold from 1977 to 1978. - Much of TV sex continued to be presented in a light-hearted, humorous manner, with a tendency in the 1978 analysis to treat sexual topics seriously as well
- Sapolsky (Winter, 1982) - All prime-time programs (8-11 p.m; ABC, CBS, and NBC) - A two year content analysis 1978-1979	- Criminal sexual acts (rape, assault, murder, prostitution); Non criminal sexual acts (intercourse, petting, affection) - Non criminal sexual acts by initiator's gender and nature of relationship (premarital, marital, extramarital)	- Significant increase (28%) in 1979 sample (total 806 sexual incidents) over 1978 sample (total 628 incidents) - The largest increase occurred in sexual acts involving unmarried partners - Intercourse appeared minimally as an implied behavior - Sex on TV appeared predominantly as reference and not overt action. - Most often treated humorously, the portrayal of sex within dramatic forms has increased - The family viewing hours contained as much sex as later evening hours

Figure 2 (cont'd)

- Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman, and Linsangan (1993) - Three episodes of each 19 prime-time shows in the 1985 TV season - Amount and kind of sex content on prime-time TV series most viewed by adolescents	- Visual and verbal instances of prostitution, rape, petting, long kiss, homosexuality, interc./married, interc./unmarr., other - Participants, accompanying behaviors, time frame of act, explicitness	- An average of just under 3 acts per hour was found in the sample - Homosexuality and prostitution acts were identified once every 2 hours, with rape and petting as extremely rare acts - The majority of sexual activity in prime-time was verbal with 37% of the acts being visual - Unmarried intercourse was the most frequent sexual act (.96 behaviors per hour) - Participants more often hold positive attitudes towards the sexual act than nonparticipants
- Louis Harris and Associates (April, 1987) - Videotapes of 118 TV shows, totaling 199 half-hour segments during the afternoon (12:00-4:00 p.m.) and evening (7:30-11:00 p.m.) time slots representative of the 1986-87 TV season - Comparison of the 1986-87 season with earlier studies of sex on both prime-time and afternoon television	- Physical, verbal, and implied instances of: kissing, embracing or hugging, suggestiveness or sexual innuendo, intercourse, masturbation, contraceptives or birth control, abortion, sexuality education, STDs, deviant or discouraged sexual behavior	- An average of 29 instances per hour of sexual behavior, which amounts to over 16,000 instances of sexual material over the course of a year for the typical TV viewer - Of all types of shows afternoon serial dramas contained the most sexual content (35 instances per hour) - Verbal references to intercourse have continued to increase, now averaging about one instance per hour (0.96) - Both situation comedies and daytime soaps have the highest number of instances of sexual innuendo and suggestiveness - No graphically explicit portrayal of sexual intercourse occurred in any of the network shows studied

Figure 2 (cont'd)

- Louis Harris and Associates (January, 1988) - Video tapes of 129 TV shows, totaling 232 half-hour segments during the afternoon (12:30-4:00 p.m.) and evening (8:00-11:00 p.m.) time slots from the 1987-88 season - Comparison of the 1987-1988 season with earlier studies of sex on both prime-time and afternoon television	- Physical, verbal, and implied instances of: kissing, embracing or hugging, suggestiveness or sexual innuendo, intercourse, masturbation, contraceptives or birth control, abortion, sexuality education, STDs, deviant or discouraged sexual behavior	- An overall of 27 instances per hour of sexual behavior. - Sex had become increasingly explicit in both time slots - Explicit physical portrayal of sexual intercourse occurred in the network shows studied for the first time - References to "deviant behaviors" on serial dramas had increased over 300% over the previous season - There were almost no references to sexuality education, STDs, birth control or abortion
- Sapolsky and Tabarlet (Fall 1991) - Comparison between sex on prime-time TV in 1979 and 1989 - A total of 64 shows, yielding 57.5 hours of programming	- Noncriminal sex acts, criminal sex acts, sexual language, innuendo, atypical sexual practices, STDs, pregnancy and birth control, and sex education	- Network prime-time TV offered viewers 16 instances per hour of sexual imagery or language in 1989, compared to 13 an hour in 1979 - Just 4.4% of the sexual content on TV in 1989 dealt with matters of sexual responsibility, and AIDS is notable for its absence during the sample programs - Most of the sex activities depicted on TV occur outside the marriage, and the most common form of sex is innuendo - Whereas sex in the 1970s appeared most frequently in comedies, in the 1980s it is increasingly common to encounter sexual acts and words in dramatic formats

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Figure 2 (cont'd)

- Lowry and Shidler (1993) - Changes in the amount and types of sexual behavior in prime-time TV in programs from Fall 1987 to Fall 1991 (replication of Lowry and Towles' study of the 1987 season) - 88 hours of programs and promos from ABC, NBC, CBS, and Fox	- Verbal and physical suggestiveness, erotic touching, heterosexual intercourse, prostitution, aggressive sexual contact, homosexuality, incest, exhibitionism, masturbation, transvestitism and transexualism, voyeurism, other unnatural sexual behaviors, pregnancy and disease prevention, HIV/AIDS contracted, other STDs contracted	- The total number of codable behaviors was 734.5, or 9.66 per hour. This compares with 10.94 per hour in the Lowry and Towles study (1989), a drop of 1.28 behaviors per hour - There was less physical suggestiveness in 1991 compared to 1987, but the total for heterosexual intercourse did increase by 84%, from 1.77 to 3.26 acts per hour - Verbal references to intercourse, both married and unmarried, increased. There was more talk about sexual intercourse in 1991 - The totals for pregnancy prevention and STD prevention declined from the already low rates in 1987 (from .20 to .13 references per hour). - The network promos used words and images of unmarried sex as one of their primary forms of enticement of viewers
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Figure 3

Content Analyses of Sexual Behaviors/References on Day-Time Soap Operas

Study	Categories	Major Findings
- Greenberg, Abelman, Neuendorf (Summer 1981) - Type, frequency, and location of sexual intimacies on TV soap operas - 65 hours of soap operas over three seasons: Winter of 1976, Summer of 1979, and Summer 1980. Ten of the same soap operas were coded in all three seasons	- Intimate sexual behaviors: rape, homosexuality, interc/unmarried, interc/married, prostitution, petting, miscellaneous (other sexual acts and illegal sexual behaviors) - The physical and verbal explicitness of each incident was judged as high, low or absent	- Overall rates per hour were 2 sexual acts in 1976, 2.28 acts in 1979, and 1.80 in 1980 - Unmarried partners outnumbered married partners in incidents of and references to intercourse by a ratio of four to one. - There were virtually no physical displays accompanying intercourse/all other sexual acts - Soap operas have more sexual content than do prime-time programs, but the types of intimacies portrayed differ. In the afternoon, viewers may be titillated with heavy breathing and heavy kissing; at night, stronger allusions to more intimate acts prevail. - In soap operas, there is a minimization of sexual deviance, homosexuality, prostitution, and rape
- Lowry, Love, and Kirby (Summer 1981) - Extent and nature of sexual behavior in daytime TV soap operas - One-week sample of 12 different soap operas, yielding a total 50 hours sample	- Coding scheme based on Silverman's et al. 1978 study - Acts were coded as implied, verbal or physical - Distinctions were made between married, unmarried, and unclear marital status of partners	- The frequency of occurrence of sexual acts was 6.58 per hour - Erotic touching was the most frequently occurring sexual activity - There was no physical representation of intercourse, prostitution, and aggressive sexual contact. - Intimate relations of all kinds were most likely to occur between unmarried partners - The dominant mode of presenting sex in soap operas was talking about it

Figure 3 (cont'd)

- Lowry and Towles (1989) - Replication of Lowry, Love, and Kirby's study (1979) to determine TV soap opera's portrayal of sex, contraception, and STDs - 52.5 hours of afternoon soap operas from ABC, CBS, and NBC	- Implied, verbal or physical erotic touching, heterosexual intercourse, prostitution, aggressive sexual contact, homosexuality, deviant sexual behaviors and other, pregnancy prevention, STDs prevention, and STDs contracted	- The overall amount of sex on network soap operas increased in .8 instances per hour - There was a major increase in the ratio of sexual behaviors between unmarried and married partners (24 to 1) - There was no treatment -verbal, implied or physical- of pregnancy prevention or STD prevention in the 1987 sample - Erotic touching between unmarried persons increased from 2.3 to 3.9 codable acts per hour. Verbal references to prostitution increased from .2 to 1.1 per hour. Verbal references to aggressive sexual contact decreased from 1.4 to .4 instances per hour
- Greenberg and D'Alessio (1985) - 33.5 hours of programming including 3 episodes of 13 network daytime soap operas during 3 weeks of the 1982 season -Representation of sex in soap operas	- Prostitution, rape, homosexuality, sexual intercourse (verbally implied/visually implied), petting, other	- Talking about sex is more prevalent than engaging in it - There were approximately 1.5 verbal mentions of intercourse in an hour of soap operas - The trend towards marital infidelity continues: relatively little sex occurs among marriage partners - In this sample of 66 incidents of sexual intercourse, one-fourth of the acts were denials that sex had or would occur - Among the participants in sexual acts, there is a tendency for greater youth among females. None of the characters shown as sexually active were 40 or older

Figure 3 (cont'd)

- Greenberg, Stanley, Siemicki, Heeter, Soderman, and Linsangan (1993) - 30 hours of soap operas during the 1985 TV season - Amount and kind of sex content on soap operas most viewed by adolescents	- Visual and verbal instances of prostitution, rape, petting, long kiss, homosexuality, interc./married, interc./unmarr., other - Participants, accompanying behaviors, time frame of act, explicitness	- The soaps' sex rate in 1985 (4 acts per hour of soap opera) is 21% higher than 1982 data and 103% higher than 1980 - Intercourse accounted for 62% of all the coded sexual activity and occurred more than twice per hour-long episode - Unmarried intercourse was twice as frequent as married intercourse in this sampling - Prostitution, rape, and petting were very infrequent, and homosexuality was absent - Talking about someone else's sexual intercourse is most common than engaging in sexual acts for TV characters
- Greenberg and Busselle (1994) - 50 hours of five soap operas during the 1994 season - Analysis of soap operas sexual content in 1994, replication of Greenberg's 1985 study, and attention to "safe sex" issues	- Visual and verbal instances of prostitution, rape, petting, long kiss, homosexuality, interc./married, interc./unmarr., miscellany, context characteristics, character attributes, special content issues	- The sample yielded a total of 6.6 sexual incidents per hour long episode - For the three soaps studies in both time periods, the average number of incidents increased from 3.7 in 1985 to 5 in 1994 - Incidents of unmarried intercourse were most frequent in 1994 (2.4 p/h), followed by incidents of rape (1.4 p/h) - Married intercourse occurred at one-third the rate of that activity among unmarried couples - In 1994 25% of the visual incidents were unmarried intercourse, compared to only one visual display of that activity in 1985

Figure 4

Sexual Content on Television Series most viewed by Adolescents in Spain

Sample	28 hours of seven television series most viewed by adolescents during the 1995 season.
Purpose	To define the sexual content shown on Spanish TV programming, to quantify it, to examine its context, its participants, its implied or expressed values, and to compare results to equivalent studies conducted in the U.S.
Categories	Visual and verbal references to: Prostitution, rape, petting, homosexuality, married/intercourse, unmarried/intercourse, long kisses, other. Context characteristics: Act's length, location, serious vs. humorous context, accompanying behaviors --drinking, eating, aggression, drugs, smoking--, music in the background, position of participants, time frame of the act --present, past, future, fantasy/dream. Participants: Marital status, gender, race, age, attitude toward act, initiator, present in scene. Non-Participants: gender, age, race, relationship to participants --friend, not friend, relative, lover, former lover, co-worker, spouse, former spouse--, attitude toward the activity.

Figure 4 (cont'd)

Major Findings	A total of 197 acts/references were coded yielding an average of 7 sex acts per hour of TV series. The most prominent sexual act referred to was intercourse, which accounted for 65% of all the coded sexual activity. Intercourse occurred almost 5 times per hour. Unmarried intercourse was 8 times as frequent as married intercourse. Petting (4.1%), rape (2.5%), prostitution (4.6%), and homosexuality (3%) were the least frequent coded activities. A total of 20 instances were found under the 'other' category including references to infidelity, birth control, pregnancy, illegitimate/unknown paternity, genitalia, virility, virginity, surrogate mother, masturbation, and orgasm. Most of the sexual acts consisted of verbal references (7 per hour) rather than visual depictions (1 per hour). Talking about sex was more prevalent than engaging in it. Sexual activity on the TV series occurred in relatively brief periods. The average length of sex acts was 11 seconds. 74% of the sexual activity in the TV series was judged as humorous. Most of the participants (22%) whose marital status was known were not married to each other but had in the past been married to someone else (currently divorced or widowed). Across all acts, the largest group of participants in sexual acts was comprised of people in their 30s (44%). The second largest group was people in their 20s (22%). On average, male participants (mean age of 41) were older than female (mean age of 36). More participants (50%) held positive attitudes toward the act than nonparticipants (31%), and women (60%) were more positive than men (48%). Women (20%) more often than men (9%) were initiators of the sexual act. 86% of all sexual acts occurred in three of the Spanish series alone. Domestic series portrayed examples of all eight categories of sexual activity, whereas the imported U.S. programs portrayed only three (long kisses, petting, and unmarried/intercourse).
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APPENDICES

Appendix A

ESTUDIO: TELEVISION Y ADOLESCENTES

Este cuestionario forma parte de un estudio que se está realizando en el Departamento de Telecomunicaciones de la Universidad de Michigan State, en Estados Unidos. Estamos interesados en saber cuáles son las telenovelas y las series de televisión preferidas por los adolescentes españoles. Tus respuestas en este cuestionario nos ayudarán a comprender mejor los gustos televisivos de los jóvenes de tu edad. Tu participación en este estudio es totalmente voluntaria y tus respuestas anónimas. No tienes que escribir tu nombre en el cuestionario. Cuando hayas terminado, levanta la mano para que lo podamos recoger, mientras esperamos unos minutos a que todos tus compañeros terminen. Muchas gracias por tu participación.

Aquí tienes la lista de las telenovelas que puedes ver en televisión, después de las 12h. del mediodía. ¿Cuántas veces (de 0 a 5) has visto cada una de ellas durante la última semana?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

El desprecio _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Corazón salvaje _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Marielena _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Milagros _____	0 1 2 3 4 5

De las series de televisión de esta lista, ¿cuántas veces (de 0 a 5) durante la última semana has visto cada una de ellas?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

El coche fantástico _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Hermanas _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
“V” _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Roc _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Power Rangers _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Tarzán _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Los Simpson _____	0 1 2 3 4 5

De estas series de televisión que puedes ver de lunes a domingo, ¿cuántas veces (0 a 7) has visto cada una de ellas durante la última semana?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

Cosas de casa _____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Salvados por la campana _____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Esta serie de televisión se emite seis días a la semana. ¿Cuántos episodios has visto durante la última semana?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

Corazones salvajes _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

¿Durante la última semana, cuántas veces (0 a 4) has visto estas series de televisión?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

Al Senador, ni caso _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Padres forzosos _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Esta serie de televisión la puedes ver tres veces a la semana. ¿En las últimas DOS SEMANAS, cuántos episodios (0 a 6) has visto?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

Misterio para tres _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Estas son las series de televisión que puedes ver dos veces a la semana. ¿Cuántas veces (0 a 4) has visto cada una de ellas durante las últimas DOS SEMANAS?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

Jóvenes jinetes _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Matrimonio con hijos _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Estas son las series de televisión que se emiten entre las 9 h. y la 1:30h. de la noche. ¿En las últimas CUATRO SEMANAS, cuántas veces (0 a 4) has visto cada una de ellas?

ENCIERRA TU RESPUESTA EN UN CIRCULO

LUNES

Compuesta y sin novio _____ 0 1 2 3 4

MARTES

Quién da la vez _____ 0 1 2 3 4

La mujer de tu vida _____ 0 1 2 3 4

MIERCOLES

Villarriba y Villabajo _____ 0 1 2 3 4

JUEVES

Farmacia de guardia _____ 0 1 2 3 4

VIERNES

Doctor en Alaska _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Canguros _____ 0 1 2 3 4

SABADO

Se ha escrito un crimen _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Macgyver _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Picket Fences _____ 0 1 2 3 4

DOMINGO

Policías de Nueva York _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Murphy Brown _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Hermanos de leche _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Grandullón _____ 0 1 2 3 4

A continuación te planteamos algunas preguntas que nos ayudarán a saber más sobre los estudiantes de tu edad en este Instituto.

1. ¿Cuántos años tienes? _____

2. ¿En qué curso estás? 1º BUP 2º BUP

3. ¿Eres hombre o mujer? HOMBRE MUJER

4. ¿Cuántos hermanos tienes (incluyéndote a tí)? _____

5. ¿Cuántas personas viven normalmente en tu casa (incluyéndote a tí)?

MUCHAS GRACIAS por tu participación en este estudio.

Appendix B

TELEVISION AND ADOLESCENTS STUDY

This questionnaire is part of a research conducted by the Department of Telecommunication at Michigan State University, in the United States. We are interested in knowing what are the soap operas and TV series most viewed by adolescents in Spain. Your answers will help us to better understand your age youngster's television tastes. Your participation in this study is voluntary and your answers completely anonymous. You don't have to write your name on this questionnaire. When you are finished raise your hand and we will collect the questionnaire. Please be seated until all the students in the class are finished too. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

This is the list of the afternoon soap operas you can see on TV. In the last week, how many times (0 to 5) have you seen each soap opera?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

El desprecio _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Corazón salvaje _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Marielena _____	0 1 2 3 4 5
Milagros _____	0 1 2 3 4 5

In the last week, how many times (0 to 5) have you seen each of the following television series?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

El coche fantástico _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5

Hermanas _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5

“V” _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5

Roc _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5

Power Rangers _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5

Tarzán _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5

Los Simpson _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5

The following TV series are on the air every day of the week. In the last week, how many times (0 to 7) have you seen each show?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

Cosas de casa _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Salvados por la campana _____ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

This TV series is on the air six days a week. In the last week, how many times (0 to 6) have you seen it?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

Corazones salvajes _____

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

In the last week, how many times (0 to 4) have you seen the following TV series?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

Al Senador, ni caso _____

0 1 2 3 4

Padres forzosos _____

0 1 2 3 4

The following TV show is on the air three days a week. In the last TWO WEEKS, how many times (0 to 6) have you seen it?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

Misterio para tres _____

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

These TV series are on the air twice a week. In the last TWOWEEKS, how many times (0 to 4) have you seen each show?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

Jóvenes jinetes _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Matrimonio con hijos _____ 0 1 2 3 4

This is the list of the TV series that you can see once a week between 9:00 pm. and 1:30 am. In the last FOURWEEKS, how many times (0 to 4) have you seen each show?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

MONDAY

Compuesta y sin novio _____ 0 1 2 3 4

TUESDAY

Quién da la vez _____ 0 1 2 3 4

La mujer de tu vida _____ 0 1 2 3 4

WEDNESDAY

Villarriba y Villabajo _____ 0 1 2 3 4

THURSDAY

Farmacia de guardia _____ 0 1 2 3 4

FRIDAY

Doctor en Alaska _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Canguros _____ 0 1 2 3 4

SATURDAY

Se ha escrito un crimen _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Macgyver _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Picket Fences _____ 0 1 2 3 4

SUNDAY

Policías en Nueva York _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Los inmortales _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Murphy Brown _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Hermanos de leche _____ 0 1 2 3 4

Grandullón _____ 0 1 2 3 4

The next questions will help us understand more about the overall student population in your High school.

1. How old are you? _____

2. What grade are you in? 1º BUP 2º BUP

3. Are you male or female? MALE FEMALE

4. How many brothers and sisters do you have (including yourself)? _____

5. How many people do normally live in your house (including yourself)?

THANK YOU very much for your cooperation.

Appendix C

TV IN SPAIN, SEX CONTENT CODING FORMS: 1995
SEX ACT FORM

Coder: _____ Coder ID# _____

Show: _____ ID#: _____

Date Recorded: ____/____/____

Scene # _____

Incident # _____ (if scene has multiple sex incidents, use separate form for each)

Counter # Begin _____ Counter # End _____

Describe visual activity, if any, that is the basis for coding sexual behavior:
Act # (from below) _____

If no visual activity: NONE (0)

Describe verbal activity, if any, that is the basis for coding sexual behavior:
Give verbatim statements, in quotes, where possible
Act # (from below) _____

If no verbal activity: NONE (0)

1 = Prostitution 4 = Intercourse/married 7 = Long kiss
2 = Rape 5 = Intercourse/unmarried 8 = Other (give details)
3 = Homosexual 6 = Petting (exclude kissing)

TV VISUAL SEX ACT RELATED BEHAVIOR

LENGTH of Act _____ (in whole seconds)

LOCATION of Act: Bar (1) Restaurant (5)
 Bedroom (2) Outdoors (6)
 Car (3) Living Room (7)
 At Work (4) Other (8)_____

Is the Context more HUMOROUS or SERIOUS HUM (1) SER (2)

ACCOMPANYING BEHAVIORS with Act:

Drinking Alcohol Yes (1) No (2)
 Eating: Yes (1) No (2)
 Physical aggression Yes (1) No (2)
 Using Drugs Yes (1) No (2)
 Smoking Yes (1) No (2)

BACKGROUND MUSIC DURING ACT: Yes (1) No (2)

POSITION OF ACT:

Standing (1) Sitting (2) Lying Down(3) Other _____(4)

Code for visual and verbal acts:

TIME FRAME OF SEX ACT: Current(1) Past(2) Future(3) Fantasy/Dream(4)

SEX ACT PARTICIPANTS

Name: D E

Marital Relationship: _____

Gender: M (1) F (2)

Race: B (1) W(2) 0(3) U (4) B (1) W(2) 0(3) U (4)

Age: _____

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