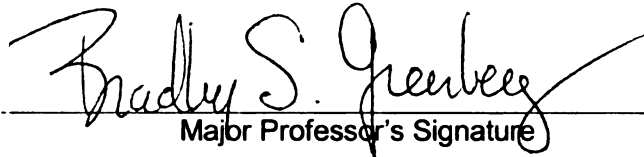This is to certify that the
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PLAYING THE "DATING GAME:" THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIEWING
REALITY DATING PROGRAMS ON TELEVISION AND COLLEGE STUDENTS'
PERCEPTIONS OF DATING

By

Amber Lee Ferris

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ABSTRACT

PLAYING THE "DATING GAME:" THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIEWING
REALITY DATING PROGRAMS ON TELEVISION AND COLLEGE STUDENTS'
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The purpose of this research was to determine what effects reality dating
programs had on viewers, as well as how perceived realism, sex, and personal experience
impact those effects. A sample of 197 undergraduates (70 males, 127 females, mean age
= 21.3 years) was administered a survey on their dating experiences, attitudes regarding
dating, importance of characteristics when choosing a date, likelihood of behaviors on a
first date, as well as average television and reality dating viewing habits. Correlational
analyses revealed that dating show viewing and perceived realism were positively related
to three dating attitudes: 1) men are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful, 2) dating
is a game or recreational sport, and 3) women are sexual objects whose value is based on
physical appearance. Also related to reality viewing and perceived realism were the first
date behaviors of going to a party or bar, drinking alcohol, initiating physical contact,
getting in a hot tub/spa, and going to a fitness club. In addition, men had higher scores for
the three dating attitude scales than women. Men also scored higher in choosing three
dating partner attributes related to reality dating shows (physical appearance, bedroom
behavior, sexual anatomy), and were more likely to choose five of six first-date behaviors
(initiate physical contact, get in a hot tub/spa, drink alcohol, go to a fitness club, and kiss
date goodnight).

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The importance of interactions involved in dating, as well as the manner in which

people date, are instrumental in how humans form long-lasting relationships. "Many of

the processes considered important for marital success (e.g., positive communication,

ability to successfully resolve conflict) are likely developed during the courtship phase,

often long before the decision to marry has been made" (Cate & Lloyd, 1992, p. 2). For

adolescents and young adults emerging into the dating realm, norms are needed to guide

expectations. When seeking information on dating, adolescents ranked dating partners,

television, friends and parents as the sources with the most information, with adults being

perceived as having the most accurate information (Wood, Senn, Desmarais, Park &

Verberg, 2002). Of all these sources, friends were found to have the most impact on

dating choice, with media exerting the least influence (Wood et al., 2002). Although

adults were the most reliable source of information on dating, actual dating behaviors

were most influenced by peers. In a study conducted in 1981, adolescents ranked

television directly behind peers as a source of where they gain information (Strasburger,

1995). If teens are relying on peers for dating advice, where do the peers get their

information? Television can often be a source of information for adolescents and is

associated with teen's own attitudes and expectations for sexual relationships and dating

(Buerkel-Rothfuss & Strouse, 1993; Ward & Rivadenyra, 1999). Singles on dating

shows may also be seen as a peer group (Strasburger, 1995), due to the fact that

participants on dating shows are seen as "real people," not celebrities or actors. This may

increase the belief that the behaviors and attitudes portrayed on reality dating shows are the norm.

Within the last five years, reality television has emerged as one of the most popular genres on television. Each broadcast network has had at least one version of a reality show, with many cable networks following suit (SirLinksalot.net, 2003). One sub-type within this genre is the reality dating show. These shows are defined as portraying people, non-actors, in dating situations with the camera acting as an observer of real-time events. Viewers act as voyeurs, watching dating situations unfold as if filmed live. ABC's *The Bachelor,* a show that pits 25 women competing for one man's hand in marriage, averaged 18.2 million viewers in April 2002 (Freydkin, 2002). Drawing a primary audience of women 18 to 34 (Freydkin, 2002), *The Bachelor* is just one of the many shows geared towards young adults. Women are not the only viewers of these shows, however. In May 2000, Blind Date posted its highest numbers ever for women 18 to 34 with a 2.0 Nielsen Rating (approximately 1 million viewers per rating point), as well as topping several other syndicated programs among men 18 to 49 (1.2 Nielsen Rating) (Ault, 2000). Because these shows are marketed as reality television and present real-life portrayals of dating situations and interactions, the possible effects of these shows deserve further attention. This study explores the relationship between reality dating show viewing and attitudes towards dating, characteristics used when choosing a partner for a first date, likelihood of certain behaviors on a first date, as well as the perceived realism of the shows, sex of the viewer and personal dating experience.

Theoretical Background

Developed by George Gerbner, Cultivation Theory posits that viewers, over time, attend to stable messages and images found on television that symbolize a standardized representation of the world (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1986; Sparks, 2002). Effects are based on viewing amount, where people who are heavily exposed to messages will be more likely to accept television's view than will light viewers. Individual differences exert little influence on cultivation effects; Gerbner explains any differences found to be relative to the theory's two processes: mainstreaming and resonance (Gerbner et al., 1980, 1986).

According to Gerbner (1980), the "mainstream" is the dominant cultural attitude and image that is portrayed on television. This component proposes that members from different groups cultivate the media's mainstream in the same ways. Therefore, heavy viewers are more likely to accept the dominant themes presented on television, regardless of factors such as demographics (Sparks, 2002). For example, people who watch soap operas every day may believe that more people cheat on their spouses. This belief would be found for both men and women, regardless of factors such as education level or race. Light viewers would not be as likely to subscribe to this belief because they are less exposed to the television view of the world.

Mainstreaming, however, is not the only way in which viewers can exhibit cultivation effects. Themes and behaviors that are salient to viewers also have an impact. Resonance occurs when media messages viewed on television coincide with a viewer's real life experiences (Gerbner et al., 1980; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994). Therefore, if you are a college student who likes to go to a bar and you see a reality

dating show in which the couple goes to a bar on their date, the theme will resonate and the effect on the viewer will be even greater.

Although Gerbner's original view of cultivation is primarily concerned with total television use, recent research into this area has emphasized the role of viewing specific genres. Genre viewing was found to be a better predictor of attitudes than viewing taken as a whole (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Davis & Mares, 1998; Segrin & Nabi, 2002; Woo & Dominick, 2001). In a study of television viewing and cultivation of expectations towards marriage in the United States, Segrin and Nabi (2002) found that both television viewing as well as specifically viewing romantically themed programming were associated with expectations for intimacy within a relationship. Results concluded that viewing romantically themed shows was positively related, whereas total viewing was negatively related to intimacy. Davis and Mares (1998) also found that analyzing a specific genre yielded cultivation effects. Heavy viewers of talk shows were not more pessimistic than light viewers; on the contrary, heavy viewers more frequently felt that people were more able to solve social problems (e.g., homelessness). When examining the relationship between media exposure and sexual behavior perceptions of adolescents and young adults, Buerkel-Rothfuss and Strouse (1997) included measures of total viewing as well as genre viewing. Results concluded that subjects who were heavy viewers of sexual programming were more likely to over-estimate the occurrence of behaviors shown on the shows in the real world. Based on previous research, it is clear that using genre as an indicator of cultivation effects is a beneficial method when examining the effects of television viewing on viewers.

Sex and Dating on Television

The most frequent occurrence of sexual content on television is sexual dialogue and innuendo (Chapin, 2000; Kaiser Family Foundation, 1999; Ward, 1995). Based on a content analysis of sexual content on prime-time television, Ward (2002) constructed a measure of the three dominant themes related to relationships on television: men are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful, dating is a game or recreational sport, and women are sexual objects whose value is based on physical appearance. These themes are believed to be highly relevant to reality dating programs. In a synopsis of an episode of The 5th Wheel (Universal Worldwide Television, 2002), similarities to Ward's (2002) themes can be seen:

> A trip to the park may be just what these daters need for a trip to love heaven…or not. Meet Michael, former stripper who makes up for his lack of intellect with his kindness; Eric, a guy who likes to brag about his sexual prowess; Jessica, a woman who wants men to be attracted to her intellect; and Erin, a woman who wants a man to talk dirty and do it well. On their date Michael shows Erin some of his stripping skills while Jessica preaches to Eric the importance of a woman with a mind. After the switch, Erin and Eric get close with a sensual massage while Michael and Jessica compare booty shaking techniques. With all the massaging and booty shaking it's definitely time to roll out The 5th Wheel. The 5th Wheel is Justin, an arrogant and egotistical smart ass. Surprisingly, he woos Jessica with his sensitive side and later almost gets Erin to break her "no kissing on the first date" rule. What will grab the girls' attention: Justin's charms?

Michael's booty shaking know-how? Or Eric's mean massage? Find out on The 5th Wheel.

This show begins with two men and two women in one group. In the beginning of the episode, each person is allowed time alone with each person of the opposite sex. After they have had a chance to spend time alone with each man/woman, a "5th wheel" is brought in to add conflict. This person is either a male or female, varying per episode. Participants then try to spend time alone with the person of their choice, leading to the final partner selection at the end of the program.

In examining the summary above, the themes demonstrated in Ward's (1995) study are evident. Dating is portrayed as a competitive game, in that each person must compete with the other to gain the affections of the opposite sex. The males on "The 5th Wheel" are highly sex-driven, while one of the women, Jessica, emphasizes the importance of intelligence (as opposed to physical traits). Women are often treated as objects, as demonstrated in the portrayal of Justin trying to get Erin to break her "no kissing on the first date" rule.

According to Cultivation Theory, themes presented on television shows are more likely to be adopted by viewers. Therefore, the more a viewer watches reality dating shows, the more likely they would be to accept themes associated with those shows. Based on Cultivation Theory and Ward's (2000) Attitudes Toward Dating and Relationships Measure, the following hypothesis is proposed:

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H1: Viewing of reality dating programs will be positively related to acceptance of themes: (a) men are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful, (b) dating is a game or recreational sport, and (c) women are sexual objects whose value is based on physical appearance.

In addition to dating attitudes, prior research has also been concerned with the ways in which people choose potential dates. Hetsroni (2000) found that when analyzing the content of dating game shows, first date choices were mostly based on physical attributes and less on personal-psychological traits such as lifestyle and education. The two shows analyzed in this study were the United States' "Singled Out" and Israel's "The Other Half," chosen due to their similar format. During these shows, two sessions are held: one for the male contestant and one for the female. Each contestant is then given the chance to choose his/her date from a pool of 50 people of the opposite sex (Hetsroni, 2000). Each show was then coded in order to determine which characteristics the contestants used most often when choosing a date. Results found that males (53%) used physical categories (e.g., physical appearance, age, sexual anatomy) as a means of screening people from the pool of singles more than females (35%)(Hetsroni, 2000).

After conducting the content analysis, a questionnaire was distributed to college students using the categories found in the shows in order to compare dating choices on television to actual behaviors. Participants in the attitude questionnaire were 100 American freshman and sophomore college students and 104 first and second year Israeli college students. Results found that subjects reported relying on intelligence and education more than physical attributes when choosing a potential date. Although shows depict dating as being focused on sex and physical attraction, personal preferences were

found to be focused more on factors such as intelligence, education, and personal-psychological traits (e.g., motivation, self-image) (Hetsroni, 2000).

This discrepancy between the characteristics used in choosing a date by participants on the dating game shows and those used by college students is important in assessing cultivation effects. The themes shown on dating game shows are completely opposite to those reportedly used by people when choosing a date. If the dominant themes on dating shows focus on physical characteristics, viewers of these shows will be more likely to rate those characteristics as important. Derived from Cultivation Theory and the findings from Hetsroni (2000), where participants on dating game shows relied more on physical than non-physical characteristics when choosing a date, the following is hypothesized:

H2: Viewing of reality dating programs will be positively related to the importance of (a) physical appearance, (b) sexual anatomy, and (c) bedroom behavior when choosing a potential first date.

Dating and Young Adults

In a study of first-date scripts, Rose and Frieze (1989) analyzed the types of behaviors men and women engage in during a first-date. They asked participants to list every activity they are involved in from preparation of the date to the date's end, ranging from "worry about or change appearance" to "kissing your date goodnight." In addition to those found by Rose & Frieze (1989), an informal assessment by the author revealed several behaviors thought to be more prevalent on reality dating shows such as drinking alcohol, going to a fitness club, and getting in a hot tub. For example "Star Date" (E! Network), a reality dating show that portrays once-popular television and movie stars and

their quests to find love, shows Butch Patrick (former Eddie Munster) playing "footsie" in a hot tub with his date (Lemire, 2002). Activities such as getting in hot tubs and going to fitness clubs on a first date are thought to be associated with reality dating shows. In order to assess the extent to which viewers adopt behaviors portrayed on these shows, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Viewing of reality dating programs will be positively related to the likelihood of first-date behaviors (a) kissing the date goodnight, (b) initiating physical contact, (c) going to a party, dance club, or bar, (d) getting in a hot tub or spa, (e) drinking alcohol on the date, and (f) going to a fitness club.

Perceived Reality

Literature concerning reality perceptions and television has often been contradictory. The concept of realism is complex. With the lack of a uniform definition and set of factors that influence realism, studies often yield opposite findings. This study will examine social realism as defined in Busselle and Greenberg (2000): "the extent to which television content, whether real or fictional, is similar to life in the real world" (p. 257). This definition coincides with Cultivation Theory, in that portrayals on television provide a social reality in which effects are based (Gerbner et al., 1980; Gerbner et al., 1994).

Several studies have examined perceived realism in relation to aggression (Atkin, 1983; Feshbach, 1976; Smith & Donnerstein, 1998; Wilson, Smith, Potter, Kunkel, Linz, Colvin, & Donnerstein, 2002), concluding that increases in perceived reality of television violence leads to an increase in aggressive behavior. This link between reality perceptions and behaviors is not always so clear. In a study on cultivation and soap

operas, perceived reality was very low. However, subjects still made higher estimates of actual pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease rates (Olson, 1994), leading to the conclusion that perceived realism may not be a factor. These conflicting results may be attributable to differences in measuring technique. In the Olson (1994) study, the scale consisted of only three items: how realistic are the problems, how realistic are the characters, and whether or not soaps take viewers to places they might not otherwise see. Other measures, such as Rubin's Realism Scale (1994), include five items focusing more on television realism in general (e.g., "television presents things as they really are in life").

Other research has found mixed results when examining realism effects. Reeves (1978) examined children's perceived realism judgments of television as a whole and its impact on pro-social (altruism, affection, expressing feelings of others, expressing feelings of self, reparation) and anti-social behavior (physical aggression, verbal aggression, deceit). Results concluded that overall perceptions of television realism were only related to affection. The researchers then decided to break down the realism measure into two dimensions: realism of pro-social behavior (helping, people on TV resembling the real world, television portraying real life) and realism of anti-social behavior (fighting and yelling). Using this method, results determined that pro-social reality perceptions were positively related to children's pro-social behavior and negatively related to anti-social behavior (Reeves, 1978). The author attributes these findings to how reality is conceptualized. Television realism taken as a whole may need to be narrowed to more specific behaviors, as found in Reeves' research. Due to the fact prior research often

yielded conflicting results, the current study proposes the following research question

concerning perceived reality and dating attitudes:

RQ1: Will perceived realism be related to viewers' attitudes towards dating themes:

(a) men are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful, (b) dating is a game or

recreational sport, and (c) women are sexual objects whose value is based on

physical appearance?

It is clear after reviewing the literature that other factors may impact perceived

realism. Personal experiences are thought to influence realism judgments (Feshbach,

1976, Funkhouser & Shaw, 1990, Reeves, 1978). However, the literature is unclear as to

whether personal experience will increase or decrease realism judgments. Chapin (2000)

found that females who were frequent daters perceived portrayals of relationships on soap

operas as being less realistic. Yet, the opposite results were found among frequent male

daters. Reeves (1978) posited that differences in pro-social and anti-social realism

judgments stemmed from children having more experience with pro-social behavior, and

a lack of exposure to anti-social behavior. Because research has been inconclusive as to

the role personal experience plays in assessing perceived realism judgments, directional

inferences cannot be made. Thus, the following research question is proposed:

RQ2: How will personal experience with dating relate to perceived realism

judgments?

Sex of the participant has also been found to yield conflicting results when

assessing perceived reality. When examining interpretation of media content, results

concluded that women were more likely than men to view sexual scenes as realistic, to

approve of relationship-maintaining behaviors, and be less approving of threats to

relationships (Brown, 2002). When analyzing the effects of realistic versus fantasy portrays of aggression on children, Feshbach (1976) found that subjects in the reality condition were almost twice as aggressive as those in the fantasy condition, with sex having no impact on those effects. In a study on expectations of marriage, Segrin and Nabi (2002) also concluded that there was no difference between males and females on perceived television realism judgments.

Overall, research has been contradictory as to the relationship between perceived realism and sex, with some studies finding significant differences and others concluding that sex had no impact on realism judgments. In order to explore the possible effects of sex on perceived realism, the following research question was developed:

RQ3: How will sex relate to perceived realism judgments?

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants in this study were 197 undergraduate students (70 males, 127

females, mean age = 21.3 years) enrolled in introductory communication courses at a

large midwestern university. Subjects were given class credit for their participation, and

were administered a survey measuring attitudes towards dating behavior, dating

preferences, perceived realism of television, as well as levels of dating experience

included in Appendix A.

Dependent Measures

Television and Dating Show Viewing. The primary concern of Cultivation Theory

is the amount of television exposure. Past research has found that, as with realism

judgments, genre-specific viewing is an important factor in cultivating beliefs (Carveth &

Alexander, 1985; Segrin & Nabi, 2002; Woo & Dominick, 2001). In order to measure

television viewing, respondents were asked their average daily viewing of television as a

whole as well as how often they view dating shows. Television viewing was measured on

a 0 to 8+ hours scale, ranging in half-hour increments.

For the dating show measure, a list of 11 reality dating programs was compiled

based on shows in syndication as well as Nielsen Ratings and intermixed with seven

other programs (see Appendix B for a list of programs). Viewing was measured on a six-

point scale ranging from 0 (never watch) to 5 (always watch). From this list of programs,

two measures of viewing were constructed in order to make genre comparisons: reality

dating and sitcom viewing. One program, The Real World, was omitted from these

measures because it was a reality program, not a reality dating show or sitcom. It was

included in the mix of programs in order to prevent subjects from discovering the true nature of the study.

To assess the degree to which the number of shows watched impacts the dependent variables, another measure of viewing for both the dating shows and sitcoms was constructed. If a subject scored a 1 (rarely watch) through 5 (always watch) for a program, they were counted as having watched the program. If a participant had never watched a program, they were given a zero for that program. The number of shows watched was then summed to give each subject a new total viewing score. Ranges for the dating show measure and the sitcom measure were 0 to 11 and 0 to 6, respectively.

Perceived Realism. Previous research has indicated that both television realism in general, as well as perceived realism of specific genres yielded more inclusive measures of perceived realism (Busselle & Greenberg, 2000; Davis & Mares, 1998; Eschholz et al., 2002; Hawkins, 1977, Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 1994). Therefore, two measures of perceived realism were constructed.

In order to measure television realism, a seven-item scale was developed using Rubin's five-item Perceived Realism Scale (as cited in Rubin et al., 1994) and two items from Reeves' (1978) measure of realism: "The same things that happen to people on TV happen to people in your neighborhood" and "People on TV shows are just like people in the real world" (p. 684-685). The initial alpha level for the newly created seven-item scale was .74; however, after eliminating the item "If I see something on TV, I can't be sure it really is that way," alpha rose to .81. This is consistent with prior research findings of the Rubin's five-item scale, with alpha levels ranging from .82 to .85 (Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985; Segrin & Nabi, 2002).

Measures for the dating program genre were derived from Hawkins (1977) study on children's reality perceptions of police shows and family based shows. In this study, "dating shows" were substituted in place of police shows or family shows for the five-item scale ($\alpha = .68$). Scores for both television and genre specific perceived reality were recorded on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Due to the fact that the developed dating show reality measure's reliability was not as high as expected, as well as the two measures being strongly correlated ($r = .51$, $p < .001$), an 11-item scale combining the seven-item and five-item scales was constructed to measure total perceptions of reality ($\alpha = .83$). This scale falls within the range of reliabilities found in the studies mentioned above, and provides a stronger, more inclusive measure of perceived realism.

Independent Measures

Attitudes towards Dating Theme Scales. The revised version of the Attitudes Toward Dating and Relationships Measure (Ward, 2002) was used to measure participants' attitudes toward three themes concerning dating and sexual relationships: men are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful, dating is a game, and women are sexual objects whose value is based on physical appearance. Initial alphas ranged from .66 to .76. Ward's (2002) alpha levels for each subscale, after confirmatory factor analysis, were: dating is a game, $\alpha = .59$, men are sex-driven, $\alpha = .71$, and women are sex objects, $\alpha = .76$.

In order to improve the "dating as a game" measure, additional items were added. Responses in the original study were measured on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Questions that were double-barreled were

broken into two items. The scale also was reduced to a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) in order to maintain uniformity. Final alphas for each of the three dating attitudes scales were: dating as a game (7 items, $\alpha = .74$), men are sex-driven (10 items, $\alpha = .80$), and women are sex objects (8 items, $\alpha = .80$).

Dating Scripts. In order to measure subject's perceptions of behaviors during a first date, a scale was constructed using first-date scripts (Rose & Frieze, 1989). In their study, Rose and Frieze (1989) asked participants to list actions that men and women typically do on dates from preparation before the date to the end of the date. If 25% or more of the respondents mentioned an item, it was included as a first-date script (e.g., "compliment your date" and "go out to dinner"). For the purposes of this study, the scripts were then modified into a 10-item scale. Because dating is typically shown from the couple's first meeting, items related to preparation before the date were not included. Subjects were then asked how likely each of the scripts would be to occur if they were on a first date, with responses ranging from 1 (not likely) to 5 (very likely). Items that were important to reality dating shows were added, such as "drink alcohol during the date" and "get in a hot tub or spa together."

Dating Preference. Hetsroni (2000) conducted a content analysis of two dating shows, "Singled Out" and "The Other Half." The categories in which participants on the shows used to choose their date were coded into eight categories: personal relationships, physical appearance, sexual anatomy or bedroom behavior, lifestyle, personal-psychological traits, financial status, intelligence or education, and age (Hetsroni, 2000). A questionnaire based on these categories was then given to subjects to determine similarities between dating show participant preferences and actual preference.

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Participants were asked to choose the two factors that were most important to them in choosing a first-time date. Based on the categories used in the previous study, subjects were asked to imagine that they are about to choose from a pool of several candidates for a first-time date, rating how important each category would be in their decision. In order to measure dating preference in the present study, a 5-point scale for each of the eight dating characteristics was constructed, ranging from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). To avoid double-barreled questions, bedroom behavior and sexual anatomy were divided into separate items.

Dating Experience. Personal experience may play a role in the cultivation of dating attitudes. Past research has emphasized the role of experience when examining both realism judgments (Busselle & Greenberg, 2000; Feshbach, 1976; Reeves, 1978) as well as cultivation effects (Olson, 1994; Woo & Dominick, 2001). Two measures of experience were examined in this study: dating level and dating satisfaction. In order to assess dating level, subjects were given a single-item measure asking them to rate their current level of dating experience, ranging from 1 (very little experience) to 5 (very experienced). Subjects were then asked to describe their typical dating experience on a 5-item semantic differential scale (α = .90). Items included in this scale were exciting/dull, pleasant/unpleasant, boring/fun (recoded), satisfying/unsatisfying, and enjoyable/not enjoyable. Table 1 lists the descriptive statistics for the main variables analyzed in the current study.

Results

Reality Viewing Analyses

Hypothesis 1 predicted that watching reality dating programs would be positively related to viewer acceptance of dating themes. Support was found for all three dating themes: men are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful, $r(1,197) = .21, p < .01$, dating is a game or recreational sport, $r(1,197) = .28, p < .01$, and women are sexual objects whose value is based on physical appearance, $r(1,197) = .25, p < .01$.

As shown in Table 2, the inter-correlations among the three variables were strong (ranging from r = .64 to .71). A combined measure was then constructed by averaging the three scales ($\alpha = .86$) and tested against the reality viewing measure. Findings were consistent with the previous test, yielding a positive correlation between the combined dating attitudes and reality viewing, $r(1,197) = .28, p < .01$.

Partial correlations were also used to test the relationship between reality dating show viewing and dating attitudes, controlling for average daily television viewing. Correlations remained significant for all three scales, although smaller: men are sex driven, $r(1,197) = .16, p < .05$, dating is a game, $r(1,197) = .21, p < .01$, and women are sex objects, $r(1,197) = .20, p < .01$. Therefore, H1 was supported; the more a participant viewed reality dating shows, the more they accepted the dating themes portrayed on the shows.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that there would be a positive correlation between reality dating show viewing and the importance of three dating attributes when choosing a partner for a first-time date: sexual anatomy, $r(1,197) = -.02$, ns, physical appearance, $r(1,197) = .09$, ns, and bedroom behavior, $r(1,197) = -.02$, ns. Support was not found for

this hypothesis, with results showing no significant correlations for any of the three attributes. Thus, the data suggest that frequent viewing of dating shows has no relationship with the importance of these qualities when selecting people for a first date.

Another issue studied was concerned with reality dating viewing and its impact on possible first-date behaviors. Hypothesis 3 predicted that viewing of reality dating programs would be positively related to the likelihood on a first date of (a) kissing your date goodnight, (b) initiation of physical contact, (c) going to a party or club, (d) getting in a hot tub or spa, (e) drinking alcohol and (f) going to a fitness club on a first date. Support was found for three of these behaviors shown in Table 3: going to a fitness club, $r(1,197) = .15, p < .05$, getting in a hot tub or spa, $r(1,197) = .16, p < .05$, and drinking alcohol, $r(1,197) = .15, p < .05$. It is important to note that two more items, "initiation of physical contact," and "going to a party or club," were marginally significant with p values of .10 and .07, respectively. Interestingly, when controlling for average TV viewing, all significant relationships disappeared with the exception of going to a fitness club, $r(1,197) = .14, p < .05$. For the "going to a party/club" item, the correlation increased from .13 to .17, making it significant at the .05 level. Therefore, reality dating program viewing had the most impact on subjects' reporting that they would be likely to go to a fitness club or a party on a first-date.

As shown in Table 3, behaviors were highly correlated with each other. A scale was then developed by summing the six items ($\alpha = .73$) and correlated with reality dating show viewing. Results yielded a significant positive correlation, $r(1,197) = .18, p < .05$. Taken as a whole, the more a participant watched reality dating shows, the more likely they were to choose first date behaviors associated with those shows.

Additional Post Hoc Viewing Analyses

In order to further explore the relationship between viewing and dating attitudes, first-date attributes, and likelihood of behaviors on a first-date, two measures were constructed: total reality dating shows viewed and sitcoms viewed. Correlational analyses were then conducted to determine the extent to which these genres are related to the each of the three dependent variables. The results of these are shown in Table 4.

When examining the dating attitude scales, only one significant relationship emerged. The amount of reality shows viewed was positively related to the attitude "dating is a game or recreational sport," $r(1,197) = .18, p < .05$. It is also important to note that the relationship between dating show viewing and the attitude "females are sex objects" was marginally significant, $r(1,197) = .13, p = .06$. Because two of the three attitudes were significant or close to significance, an additional correlation was conducted using the composite dating attitude measure, which produced a significant positive relationship, $r(1,197) = .16, p < .05$. Therefore, subjects who viewed more of the eleven dating shows agreed more with the three dating attitudes, with "dating as a game" producing the strongest result. Additionally, when examining the number of sitcoms viewed and dating attitudes, no significant correlations emerged.

Results for viewing amount in relation to the importance of dating attributes presented no significant correlations for either sitcom or dating show viewing. These results coincide with findings in earlier analyses concerning the frequency of reality viewing on attributes.

Contrary to findings concerning dating attitudes, sitcom viewing was the only genre to produce significant results for the likelihood of behaviors during a first-date with

dating shows only yielding a marginal relationship. Two behaviors were found to be positively related to sitcom viewing: going to a party, club, or bar ($r(1,197) = .17, p < .05$) and drinking alcohol ($r(1,197) = .17, p < .05$). Going to a party, club or bar was also related to the number of dating shows viewed, $r(1,197), p = .06$.

Perceived Realism

Three research questions were posited in the current study regarding the effects of perceived realism on viewers. RQ1 explored the extent to which perceived realism was related to the dating attitude scales. A correlational analysis produced significant positive correlations: men are sex-driven, $r(1,195) = .34, p < .01$, dating is a game, $r(1,195) = .40$, $p < .01$, and women are sexual objects, $r(1,195) = .37$, $p < .01$.

In order to gain more insight as to the importance of perceived realism on dating attitudes, partial correlations were assessed with reality dating show viewing on the three attitude scales, controlling for realism. Table 5 illustrates the large differences found in correlation strength when excluding realism. In the case of the attitude "males are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful," the relationship with viewing loses significance, $r(192) = .12, p = .09$. For the remaining dating attitude scales "dating is a game," $r(192) = .20, p < .01$ and "women are sex objects," $r(192) = .16, p < .05$, correlations remained significant, although considerably lower. It is clear from these results that perceived realism judgments have an impact on viewers' dating attitudes.

An additional analysis was also conducted for reality perceptions based on the viewing frequency of sitcoms measure. However, the correlation was not significant, $r(195) = -.04$, ns, and sitcom viewing was not related to subjects' perceptions of television reality.

The second research question asks how personal experience relates to perceived realism judgments. Two measures of personal dating experience were measured in this study: current dating level and a scale measuring an evaluation of typical dating experiences. Correlations revealed no significant relationships between current dating level and dating evaluations with perceived realism; therefore, personal experience was not related to realism judgments. In other words, the data suggest that whether or not participants considered themselves to be experienced in dating and how positive or negative those experiences were did not impact their perceptions of television realism.

Research question three was concerned with how sex might affect perceived realism. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to test this question. Results did not yield a significant difference between men ($M = 2.31$, $SD = .71$) and women ($M = 2.14$, $SD = .60$) in their judgments of realism, $t(1,193) = 1.74$, $p = .08$. Therefore, how real a person believes television to be is not attributable to sex differences.

Additional Post Hoc Analyses of Sex Differences

In order to further explore sex differences, post hoc analyses were conducted for both males and females on each of the three hypotheses. As shown in Table 6, several interesting results were found.

For each of the three dating attitudes, both male and female respondents' reality viewing were significantly related to the belief that men are sex-driven and have trouble being faithful, dating is a game or recreational sport, and women are sexual objects whose value is based on physical appearance. Men, however, exhibited stronger correlations than women on each of the attitudes. This difference was highest for the

"women are sex objects" measure, with the male correlation, $r(70) = .40, p < .01$, being almost double that of women, $r(127) = .23, p < .05$.

When examining sex differences on the importance of dating attributes, results were similar to those found for Hypothesis 2. For males, reality viewing was not related to the attributes of physical appearance, sexual anatomy and bedroom behavior. Women also yielded non-significant results for both sexual anatomy and bedroom behavior; however, one significant relationship did emerge. The more women watched reality dating shows, the more likely they were to choose physical appearance as being important when choosing a date, $r(127) = .21, p < .05$.

Conversely, the only significant relationships between reality viewing and the likelihood of behaviors on a first date were found for males. Of the six behaviors examined in hypothesis 3, initiating physical contact, $r(70) = .29, p < .05$, getting in a hot tub or spa, $r(70) = .33, p < .01$, and going to a fitness club, $r(70) = .31, p < .01$, were related to males' reality viewing. No significant relationships were found among women.

In addition to examining how sex impacts the three hypotheses posed in this study, post hoc independent-samples t-tests were conducted to determine sex differences across variables. The results of these tests are in Table 7.

When examining the impact of sex on dating attitudes, results concluded that men were more likely than women to agree that men are sex-driven, $t(1,107.5) = 3.81, p < .001$, dating is a game, $t(1,195) = 4.29, p < .001$, and women are sex-objects, $t(1,118.2) = 4.95, p < .001$.

Similar to dating attitudes, significant differences were also found between sex and importance of date characteristics. Males were significantly more likely to rate

physical appearance, $t(1,195) = 3.76$, $p < .001$, sexual anatomy, $t(1,195) = 4.86$, $p < .001$, and bedroom behavior, $t(1,195) = 2.59$, $p < .01$, as being more important than females. Women, on the other hand, were found to rate non-physical categories as being more important when choosing a mate: lifestyle, $t(1,195) = -1.84$, p = .07, personal-psychological traits, $t(1,195) = -2.68$, $p < .01$, and financial status, $t(1,195) = -3.49$, $p < .01$.

Results for sex differences in likelihood of dating behaviors found that men were more likely than women to report that they would initiate physical contact during a first date, $t(1,195) = 4.98$, $p < .001$, get in a hot tub or spa, $t(1,109.9) = 5.23$, $p < .001$, drink alcohol during the date, $t(1,195) = 2.37$, $p < .05$, go to a fitness club, $t(1,111.4) = 2.38$, $p < .05$, and kiss their date goodnight, $t(1,162.9) = 4.01$, $p < .05$. There was no significant difference found between men and women when deciding to go to a party, club or bar on a first date, $t(1,195) = .24$, ns.

No significant differences between sexes also were found concerning reality television viewing, dating level, and dating evaluations. Men and women watch dating shows equally, have the same experience level with dating, and rate their typical dating experiences equally.

Discussion

The main goal of this study was to explore the relationships between viewing

reality dating programs and its viewers, as well as which variables may impact those

relationships. These results show that watching television, particularly dating shows, can

be related to viewers' attitudes and behaviors. According to Cultivation Theory, heavy

viewing can influence attitudes and beliefs about the real world (Gerbner et al., 1980;

Gerbner et al., 1994). Hypothesis 1 was supported; the more viewers watched reality

dating shows the more they agreed with the dating attitudes: men are sex-driven and have

trouble being faithful, dating is a game or recreational sport, and women are sexual

objects whose value is based on physical appearance. One question posed by previous

research has been whether genre specific viewing might be more important when

analyzing cultivation effects than total viewing (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Segrin &

Nabi, 2002; Woo & Dominick, 2001). When controlling for average TV viewing, results

remained significant, though reduced. This suggests that genre does have a significant

impact on viewers' attitudes, with average viewing exerting an influence on those effects.

In the current study, genre was a better indicator of cultivation effects; however, average

viewing did have an impact on those effects. It is possible that in order to fully measure

the extent to which television viewing is related to cultivation effects, both average

viewing and genre viewing should be taken into account.

Analysis of a second genre, sitcoms, yielded no significant relationships between

viewing and the three attitude scales. Further exploration into genre and viewing resulted

with a significant positive relationship for total dating show viewing and the composite

dating attitudes measure, whereas sitcom total viewing was inconclusive. However, it is

interesting to note that for the total sitcom viewing measure, correlations for "men are sex-driven" and "women are sex objects" were negative, though not significant. These results suggest that genre does have an impact on cultivating attitudes and beliefs; however, total television viewing may still make an important contribution to those effects. Thus, the findings of this study support as well as extend Cultivation Theory by documenting the relationship between television viewing and attitudes, as well as identifying the relationship between genre viewing and those attitudes.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that reality dating show viewing would be positively correlated with several first date behaviors. This hypothesis was partially supported. Three behaviors were significant: going to a fitness club, getting in a hot tub/spa, and drinking alcohol. Initiating physical contact and going to a party/club were marginally significant, and kissing on a first date had no relationship to reality dating show viewing. The occurrence of these behaviors was not derived from a content analysis, but rather from a list of actual first-date scripts (Rose & Frieze, 1989). The behaviors added to the existing scripts that were believed to be relevant to dating shows all were found to be significantly related to viewing, with the exception of going to a party or club. When controlling for average television viewing, the only two relationships that were significant were "going to a fitness club" and "going to a party/club." Additionally, several of the relationships disappeared when controlling for average viewing; however, in the case of the "going to a party/club" item, the correlation increased. From these results it is clear that both genre analyses as well as average television viewing are important when assessing the extent to which the likelihood of dating behaviors exhibit cultivation effects.

Similar to the findings when controlling for average TV viewing, the only relationship that emerged when examining the number of dating shows viewed was a marginally significant correlation with the "going to a party/club." Frequency of sitcom viewing also had an effect on the types of behaviors, with the only two significant relationships emerging for drinking alcohol and going to a party or club. These relationships held true for the total sitcom viewing measure as well, with both drinking alcohol and going to a party or club being the only two significant relationships. The results from hypotheses one and three lead to the conclusion that both genre and television viewing as a whole can result in cultivation effects for both attitudes and behaviors. Future research should explore comparisons between reality dating shows and other fictional genres that include romantic relationships such as soap operas to determine whether these results hold true.

This study hypothesized that increased viewing would lead to increased importance of dating characteristics thought to be most prevalent in reality dating shows: physical appearance, sexual anatomy, and bedroom behavior. Yet, this hypothesis was not supported. These characteristics were found to be present in a content analysis of two dating game shows (Hetsroni, 2000); however, it is possible that these are not the most dominant traits used for date selection in reality dating shows. In order for themes to be cultivated, they must be present. A limitation of this study is the unavailability of a content analysis of reality dating shows. Future research should explore the impact of television viewing on importance of dating characteristics after a conclusive content analysis has been conducted.

Another explanation for the lack of support for H2 is that television viewing may not exert the most influence on viewers when choosing a mate. Sex differences may better explain why viewers choose certain characteristics over others. Consistent with prior research (Hetsroni, 2000), males were more likely to choose physical categories (physical appearance, sexual anatomy, bedroom behavior) as being more important than females, with females choosing more non-physical characteristics of people for a first-date (lifestyle, personal-psychological traits, financial status). These preferences could be due to cultural and sociological factors rather than viewing of reality dating programs.

The debate over perceived realism and how it affects viewers yielded mixed results. Research question one was concerned with whether or not perceived realism would impact viewers' agreement with the three dating attitude scales. Perceived reality was strongly correlated with each dating attitude scale, leading to higher positive correlations than the viewing comparison alone. More importantly, when analyzing the impact of viewing on attitudes controlling for perceived realism, the correlations decreased. Previous research has also found reality perceptions to be a significant predictor of attitudes (Segrin & Nabi, 2002). From this study, it is clear that reality perceptions are key when assessing the effects that viewing reality dating shows have on its audience.

Regarding the description of factors that impact perceptions of realism, this study has been inconclusive. Neither personal experiences with dating (RQ2) or sex (RQ3) were found to be significantly related to perceptions of realism. One explanation for why personal experience may have failed to relate to realism may be due to measurement. The two measures used to describe dating experiences may not have captured the complexity

of this variable. It is also possible that there are other variables not examined in this study such as ethnicity, involvement with the shows, and socio-economic status that may affect reality perceptions.

As found in previous research (Feshbach, 1976; Segrin & Nabi, 2002), there were no sex differences in perceptions of television realism. These finding are consistent with Cultivation Theory, in that effects should remain consistent across demographic factors such as sex.

Also based on the Cultivation perspective, viewing amount was the driving factor behind reality perceptions. In the current study, both total daily viewing (r(195) = .14, p < .05) and viewing of reality dating programs (r(195) = .28, p < .01) were significantly related to perceived realism. Interestingly, the measure of sitcom viewing yielded negative, though not significant results. It may be possible that viewing "reality" television, as opposed to scripted forms of programming such as sitcoms, increases reality perceptions. Additional research is needed in order to further explain reality perceptions and their link to media effects.

Although sex was not found to be a factor in perceived realism judgments, several differences were found when analyzing correlations from the three hypotheses by sex. Consistent with the findings for reality viewing and the dating attitude scales, both men and women yielded significant correlations for each attitude. Males, however, exhibited higher positive correlations than females across all three scales. A significant relationship also emerged between women's reality viewing and the importance of physical appearance for partner attributes. When examining the likelihood of behaviors on a first date, only men yielded significant results in three categories: initiating physical contact,

getting in a hot tub/spa, and going to a fitness club. These results are contrary to Cultivation Theory; however, when assessing sex differences, total television viewing amount may not be the key factor. Other factors such as the types of shows watched and participants' experience with dating may also impact differences between the sexes. According to Ward and Rivadenyra (1999), television has the greatest impact on areas in which viewers have the least experience. Additionally, Segrin and Nabi (2002) found that women watched more romantic-genre television than men. A limitation of this study is that it did not assess the extent to which participants view other genres of television. Future research should expand measures to include genre-specific viewing habits and other measures including experience measures related to the specific attitudes and behaviors present on the shows.

Another limitation of this study concerns the methodology used. Survey research cannot imply cause and effect; therefore, an alternative explanation for these findings may be due to selective exposure. For example, having the attitude "men are sex-driven" may cause subjects to watch more reality dating shows, rather than viewing causing the attitude. In order to further explain the relationships between reality dating show viewing and the variables examined in this study, experimental research is needed. By measuring subjects' attitudes prior to viewing, cause and effect may be more apparent.

Care should also be taken when generalizing these results to the population. The sample used was a convenience sample of college students enrolled in communication courses. It is possible that communication majors may be different than students in other disciplines. Future research should use random sampling techniques in order to gain a more representative sample.

In conclusion, viewing reality dating programs can have an impact on viewers. Not only is reality viewing related to dating attitudes, but also the likelihood of behaviors during a date. The degree to which a viewer believes dating shows are real was an important factor when assessing dating attitudes. Although sex and personal experience did not seem to have an effect on reality perceptions, this study has shed some light on the subject of perceived reality. It is clear from this study that there are vast opportunities to explore the realm of reality dating shows and the role viewing may play in facilitating effects. Future research should concentrate on content analyses, experiments, and better measurement of constructs such as perceived realism and personal experience.

Table 1

Descriptives of Dependent and Independent Variables

Independent Variables (n = 197)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Scale Range
Viewing frequency of reality dating programs	1.75	.95	(0 to 5)
Number of dating shows viewed	8.94	3.49	(0 to 11)
Viewing frequency of sitcom programs	2.35	1.09	(0 to 5)
Number of sitcoms viewed	5.24	1.53	(0 to 6)
Average daily television viewing hours	2.70	1.59	(0 to 8)
Perceived realism (n = 195)	2.20	.67	(1 to 5)

Dependent Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Dating attitude scales (n = 197)*		
Males are sex-driven	2.89	.70
Females are sex objects	2.70	.78
Dating is a game	2.51	.73
Importance of dating attributes (n = 197)*		
Physical appearance	3.95	.80
Bedroom behavior	3.41	1.12
Sexual anatomy	3.16	1.20
Likelihood of behaviors on a 1st date (n = 197)*		
Go to a party, club, bar	3.51	1.30
Drink alcohol	3.48	1.25
Kiss date goodnight	3.44	1.17
Initiate physical contact	2.89	1.19
Get in hot tub/spa	2.28	1.20
Go to a fitness club	1.98	1.05
Current level of dating experience (n = 196)*	3.38	1.05
Dating satisfaction scale (n = 195)**	2.67	1.06

*Note: (Range = 1 to 5) A high score equals a more positive evaluation, **(Range = 1 to 7) A low score equals a more positive evaluation.

Table 2

Correlations Between Reality Dating Show Viewing and Dating Attitude Scales

	Males are sex-driven	Dating is a game	Women are sex objects
Reality DS viewing (n = 197)	.21**	.28**	.25**
Reality DS viewing controlling for average TV viewing (n = 194)	.16*	.21**	.20**
Males are sex-driven		.71**	.64**
Dating is a game			.68**

* *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01

Table 3

Correlations Between Reality Dating Show Viewing and Likelihood of Behaviors on a First Date

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Reality DS viewing (n = 197)	----	.14*	.01	.12	.13	.16*	.15*
2. Go to fitness club		----	.13	.15*	.20**	.37**	.08
3. Kiss date goodnight			----	.61**	.30**	.40**	.39**
4. Initiate physical contact				----	.20**	.36**	.32**
5. Go to party/club					----	.35**	.51**
6. Get in hot tub/spa						----	.31**
7. Drink alcohol							----

*p < .05; **p < .01

Table 4

Additional Correlational Analyses by Number of Shows Viewed

Dependent Variables (n = 197)	Dating	Sitcoms
Dating attitude scales		
Males are sex-driven	.10	-.02
Females are sex objects	.13 (p = .06)	-.01
Dating is a game	**.18***	.03
Importance of dating attributes		
Physical appearance	.06	.00
Bedroom behavior	-.03	.01
Sexual anatomy	.01	.04
Likelihood of behaviors on a 1st date		
Go to a party, club, bar	.14 (p = .06)	**.17***
Drink alcohol	.08	**.17***
Kiss date goodnight	-.02	.07
Initiate physical contact	.00	.04
Get in hot tub/spa	.08	.06
Go to a fitness club	.04	.02

* p < .05

Table 5

Correlations Between Reality Dating Show Viewing and Dating Attitude Scales

	Males are sex-driven	Dating is a game	Women are sex objects
Reality DS viewing (n = 197)	.21*	.28*	.25*
Reality DS viewing controlling for perceived realism (n = 192)	.12 (*p*=.09)	.20**	.16*

*p < .05, ** p < .01

Table 6

Correlations between Reality Viewing and Hypotheses by Sex

Variables with Reality Television Viewing	Male Correlation (n = 70)	Female Correlation (n = 127)
Dating attitude scales (H1)		
Men are sex-driven	.28*	.22*
Dating is a game	.34**	.31*
Women as sex objects	.40**	.23*
Importance of dating attributes (H2)		
Physical appearance	-.08	.21*
Sexual anatomy	.07	-.06
Bedroom behavior	.12	-.05
Likelihood of behaviors on a 1st date (H3)		
Initiate physical contact	.29*	.08
Go to party, club, bar	.22	.09
Get in hot tub or spa	.33**	.13
Drink alcohol	.17	.16
Go to fitness club	.31**	.05
Kiss date goodnight	.07	.00

$*p < .05, **p < .01$

Table 7

Sex Differences

Variables	Male Mean (SD)	Female Mean (SD)	Sex difference
Reality viewing	1.66 (.92)	1.80 (.97)	ns
Dating attitude scales			
Men are sex-driven	**3.16** (.82)	2.74 (.58)	$t = 3.81$***
Dating is a game	**2.80** (.80)	2.35 (.63)	$t = 4.29$***
Women as sex objects	**3.07** (.83)	2.49 (.67)	$t = 4.95$***
Importance of dating attributes			
Physical appearance	**4.29** (.90)	3.80 (.76)	$t = 3.76$***
Sexual anatomy	**3.69** (1.21)	2.89 (1.09)	$t = 4.86$***
Bedroom behavior	**3.69** (1.10)	3.26 (1.11)	$t = 2.59$**
Likelihood of behaviors on a 1st date			
Initiate phys. contact	**3.43** (1.12)	2.60 (1.13)	$t = 4.95$***
Go to party, club, bar	3.54 (1.28)	3.50 (1.31)	ns
Get in hot tub or spa	**2.89** (1.32)	1.94 (.96)	$t = 5.23$***
Drink alcohol	**3.76** (1.13)	3.32 (1.28)	$t = 2.37$*
Go to fitness club	**2.24** (1.23)	1.84 (.91)	$t = 2.38$*
Kiss date goodnight	**3.86** (1.01)	3.21 (1.19)	$t = 4.01$***
Personal Experience Measures			
Current level dating	3.41 (1.08)	3.36 (1.03)	ns
Date Evaluation Scale	2.64 (1.14)	2.68 (1.02)	ns

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

APPENDICES

Dating and Television Survey
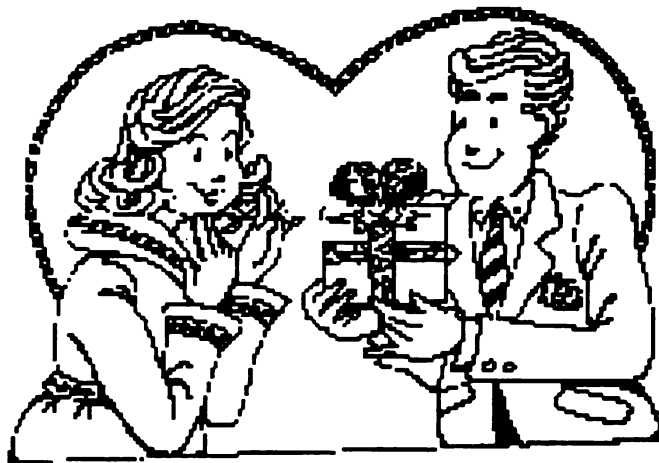
Please circle your answer for the following questions:

1. Are you: MALE   FEMALE

2. What is your age?

18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25+

Please answer the following questions concerning your own dating experience. Consider a date to be participating in an activity with another person with the goal of pursuing a romantic relationship.

1. What age were you when you first started going out on dates?

Haven't Dated   Younger than 16   16   17   18   19   20   21+

2. How would you describe your
   current level of experience with dating?

	Very Little Experience			Very Experienced
	1	2	3	4	5

3. How many dates have you been on?

None   1-9   10-19   20-29   30-39   40-49   50+

4. How many dates have you been on with someone whom you have never met (i.e. "blind dates")?

0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10+

In the next section, place an X on the space that shows how closely the adjectives describe your <u>typical</u> dating experiences.

1. exciting _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ dull

2. pleasant _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ unpleasant

3. enjoyable _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ not enjoyable

4. boring _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ fun

5. satisfying _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ unsatisfying

For the section below, imagine that you are about to choose a romantic partner from a pool of several candidates for a first-time date. Here is a list dating characteristics. Please choose how important each characteristic would be in your decision.

	Not Important				Very Important
1. Personal Relationships (e.g., values commitment)	1	2	3	4	5
2. Physical Appearance (height, weight, hair, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
3. Sexual anatomy (penis, breasts, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
4. Bedroom behavior (foreplay tactics, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
5. Lifestyle (e.g., how he/she prefers to spend the weekend)	1	2	3	4	5
6. Personal-psychological traits (motivation, Self-image, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
7. Financial status	1	2	3	4	5
8. Intelligence or education	1	2	3	4	5
9. Age	1	2	3	4	5

In this next section, please circle the answer that best describes how likely the following events would occur **if you were on a first date**.

		Not Likely				Very Likely
1.	Ask questions to try and get to know your date.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Compliment your date.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Go to a health/fitness club.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Kiss your date goodnight.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Go to the movies or a show.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Try to impress your date.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Go to a concert.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Initiate physical contact.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Go to dinner or out to eat.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Go to a party, dance club or bar.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Tell date you had a good time.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Get in a hot tub or spa together.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Joke, laugh and talk with your date.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Drink alcohol during the date.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Go on a walk together.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Hold hands.	1	2	3	4	5

Directions: Please complete the following questions by circling the answer that best describes your opinion.

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1.	An attractive woman should expect sexual advances and should learn how to handle them.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Men are mostly interested in women as potential sex partners.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Men often resist their sexual urges.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Dating is basically a game where males and females try to manipulate each other.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	No one wants to date a woman who has "let herself go."	1	2	3	4	5
6.	It is natural for a man to want to admire or ogle women, even if he has a girlfriend.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Men who are "good with the ladies" and who can get any woman into bed are cool.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Women should be more concerned about their appearance than men.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	There's nothing wrong with men whistling at shapely women.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	People should keep their options open by dating several people at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Something is wrong with a guy who turns down the chance to have sex.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	A man will be most successful in meeting or picking up women if he uses flattering, sexy, or cute pick-up lines.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Being with an attractive woman gives a man prestige.	1	2	3	4	5

14. Men think about sex all the time.   1   2   3   4   5

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>Strongly
Disagree</td><td></td><td></td><td>Strongly
Agree</td></tr>
</table>

15. It is natural for a man to comment on women's bodies, even if he has a girlfriend.   1   2   3   4   5

16. Using her physical appearance is the best way for a woman to attract a man.   1   2   3   4   5

17. One way to gain the upper hand when dating is by giving or withholding sex.   1   2   3   4   5

18. Men are always ready and willing for sex.   1   2   3   4   5

19. Dating relationships should be taken seriously.   1   2   3   4   5

20. Women should spend a lot of time trying to be pretty.   1   2   3   4   5

21. It is easy for men to remain faithful to only one woman.   1   2   3   4   5

22. There is nothing wrong with men being primarily interested in a woman's body.   1   2   3   4   5

23. You don't need a relationship to have sex; all you need are two people who are attracted to each other.   1   2   3   4   5

24. Men don't want to be "just friends" with a woman.   1   2   3   4   5

25. Dating is only a matter of wins and losses.   1   2   3   4   5

26. People who date lots of people at once have more fun than people who only date one person at a time.   1   2   3   4   5

27. It is only natural for a man to make sexual advances to a woman he finds attractive.   1   2   3   4   5

28. It bothers me when a man is interested in a woman only if she is pretty.   1   2   3   4   5

Please circle the answer that best describes your attitude towards television in general.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. Television presents things as they really are in life.	1	2	3	4	5
2. If I see something on TV, I can't be sure it really is that way.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Television lets me really see how other people live.	1	2	3	4	5
4. TV does not show life as it really is.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Television lets me see what happens in other places as if I were really there.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The same things that happen to people on TV happen to people in your neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	5
7. People on TV shows are just like people in the real world.	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the answer that best describes your attitude toward television dating shows. Please consider dating shows to be any show where non-actors are shown in dating situations (e.g., *Blind Date, Elimidate, Joe Millionaire, The Bachelor*)

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. Romantic relationships on dating shows are not like romantic relationships in real life.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The couples on dating shows are like couples you could meet.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Dating programs help me know how to behave on a date.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The places couples go to date in real life are not like those on dating shows.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Couples on dating shows behave the same way couples in real life do when dating.	1	2	3	4	5
6. What happens on dating shows on TV are things that could happen on a real date.	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle your answer.
1. How often do you or have you in the past watched the following shows:

		Rarely Watch				Always Watch
Never Watch	**A) Joe Millionaire**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**B) Friends**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**C) Will and Grace**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**D) The Bachelor**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**E) The Real World**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**F) Blind Date**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**G) That 70's Show**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**H) Seinfeld**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**I) Elimidate**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**J) The Bachelorette**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**K) Temptation Island**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**L) Taildaters**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**M) Spin City**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**N) Dismissed**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**O) Change of Heart**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**P) Frasier**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**Q) The 5th Wheel**	1	2	3	4	5
Never Watch	**R) Meet My Folks**	1	2	3	4	5

2. In an average day, how many hours of television do you watch?

0   ½   1   1 ½   2   2 ½   3   3 ½   4   4 ½   5   5 ½   6   6 ½   7   7 ½   8+