REALITY TV
AND INTERPERSONAL
RELATIONSHIP PERCEPTIONS

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Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to understand the relationship between viewer motives for watching reality TV, reality TV exposure, and interpersonal relationship perceptions. The interpersonal relationship perceptions that were examined included: attachment styles, love styles, and machiavellianism. This research used both quantitative surveys and focus group interviews as data.

The quantitative data analysis produced support of genre-specific media effects. First, motives were examined in relation to reality TV. Watching for positive outcomes was positively related to reality TV viewing and watching for interpersonal outcomes was negatively related. Second, the relationship between reality TV exposure and relationship perceptions were examined. While controlling for overall TV viewing, reality TV was found to be positively associated with a game-playing and cunning view of relationships, and negatively related to an avoidant attachment style. Then, sub-genres of reality TV were examined. Watching reality shows with traditional values was negatively related to a game-playing perspective of love, and watching half-hour network dating shows was positively related to this game-playing perspective. Watching reality shows that were filmed in a documentary style was positively related to a cunning view of relationships. When further examining this relationship, reality TV was found to mediate the relationship between motives and outcomes in three models: first, between interpersonal motives and machiavellianism; second, between positive outcomes and the avoidant attachment style; and third, between interpersonal motives and the avoidant attachment style. Interpersonal attraction and perceived reality were not found to

moderate the relationship between motives for watching reality TV and interpersonal relationship perceptions.

Interpretation of the focus group interviews produced two major themes relating to the motives for watching reality TV and interpretation of the content. The first theme is labeled "motives for watching reality TV." The reality shows that participants reported watching were either very similar or extremely contradictory to their own lives. The second major theme was "effects of watching reality TV." Respondents discussed how reality TV made them self-reflect on their own lives and how reality TV impacted the way they view relationships. Finally, Respondents agreed that reality TV did not accurately depict reality, but admitted that they continued to watch.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Individuals now have more viewing choices than ever before in deciding how to spend their time with television. With the explosion of cable programming channels, many different genres of programming are competing for niche market audiences (Hiebert & Gibbons, 2000). One programming type that has rapidly gained popularity across all TV channels in recent years is reality television programming. Most channels have some type of reality show (even ESPN created a reality show) to quench audience's thirst for reality television programming. Research is needed to identify how reality television may differentially influence audience's attitudes and perception. Therefore, this is a study of how perceptions are cultivated by reality TV programming.

While there are different genres within reality programming, including romantic, talent, quiz, and game (Bailey & Barbato, 2003), these shows are all about relationships of some sort. The *Bachelor* is about developing romantic relationships. *Survivor* is about manipulating relationships to outlast everyone. *Real World* is about maintaining relationships while cohabitating. These are just a few examples of the different ways that reality programming depicts relationships. This leads to one underlying assumption that this research is based upon. Reality programming provides viewers with perceptions regarding interpersonal relationships. Therefore, one goal of this study is to understand how these perceptions are cultivated in audience members. As of yet, there are no reality shows that only contain one character; therefore, all of these shows are providing information to viewers about relationships with others. According to script theory, the mass media provide individuals with behavioral scripts of how to act in social situations

(Simon & Gagnon, 1987). This suggests that the mass media provide information about how to communicate in interpersonal encounters. I do not expect that individuals will model this behavior, but rather cultivate relationship perceptions based on the information received from reality television programs.

Rationale

Bridging Mass Communication and Interpersonal Communication

Some have argued that the discipline of communication is going through a crisis of legitimization (McMahan, 2004). Because the field is relatively new and does not even exist in some universities, communication has been constantly trying to prove itself as a discipline. McMahan (2004) argues that this crisis for legitimization will occur as long as the discipline is fragmented. By including various subdivisions (i.e., mass, political, organizational, and interpersonal), it is difficult to create one unified discipline. Everything appears divided: associations, journals, universities, and graduate programs. However, the reasoning is unclear. Interpersonal communication and mass communication do not exist in isolation from one another; therefore, they should not be studied as such. These channels are complementary, interchangeable, and not easily distinguished from one another (Chaffee, 1982). Therefore, these areas should not be segregated. Research should be conducted to help bring together these separate areas of communication to provide a greater understanding of the broader communication context, one that includes both mass and interpersonal communication.

This argument is not a new one. In 1988, *Human Communication Research* dedicated an entire volume to the "false dichotomy" between the research in mass communication and interpersonal communication. This separation is viewed as artificial

and unnecessary (Berger & Chaffee, 1988). Even though researchers have acknowledged this forced divide, little has changed to perpetuate a unification of the subdisciplines of mass and interpersonal communication. One reason for this continued divide is theoretical. In the discipline of communication, which greatly values theory, separate mass communication theories and interpersonal theories exist (McMahan, 2004). Most theories do not overlap or explain the influence of other channels. The lack of theory bridging these areas has been cited as a reason for the continued segregation (McMahan, 2004).

Another issue to consider when bridging interpersonal and mass communication is the level of analysis on which the researcher is asking questions. By combining mass communication and interpersonal communication, a common level of analysis must be determined. Pan and McLeod (1991) discuss the importance of multilevel analysis in mass communication to contribute to theoretical development. They argue that mass communication research must be differentiated and understood on four levels: macro-to-macro, macro-to-micro, micro-to-macro, micro-to-micro. These levels are based on the unit of analysis and the direction of influence. Micro indicates individual-level, and macro indicates social system-level, and the order dictates the direction of influence. By examining how mass communication occurs across these four levels, we can have a greater understanding for how cross-level and within-level communication occurs. By examining how macro processes, such as television messages, might influence interpersonal interactions, micro processes; this study will aim to connect the macro-micro level of analysis. Understanding relationships between levels of communication will aid in a greater understanding of communication as a whole. Price, Ritchie, and

Eulau (1991) argue that interdisciplinary research lies in the linkages between levels of analysis. "The cross-level theorist aims to avoid logical fallacies and methodological mistakes while constructing broad, complex theories that answer interesting and useful questions" (p. 270). Researchers who are interested in connecting various levels of analysis must utilize logical arguments with appropriate methodologies to develop the necessary theories to bridge the macro-micro divide.

Individuals do not separate their mass communication channels and their interpersonal communication channels in their real lives (McMahan, 2004). Therefore, as researchers, we should not make this artificial distinction. What is important to understand is the direction and intensity of these cross-level relationships. This is what will help researchers to develop theory to bridge mass and interpersonal communication. "Interpersonal communication and mass communication remain integrated everywhere except the discipline devoted to their study" (p.33). The research that follows aims to make cross-level connections in the areas of both interpersonal and mass communication by understanding how the two areas overlap.

Therefore, in accordance with Price et al. (1991), this study will incorporate theory and methodology that allows for the examination of cross-level linkages. The theory I have selected, the gratification/cultivation model, combines both uses and gratifications and cultivation theory to understand how gratifications sought influence one's exposure, which influences one's TV world attitudes which, in turn, influences one's attitudes and judgments about the real world (Bilandzic & Rossler, 2004). My research will examine how one's reasons for watching reality television are correlated with exposure to reality TV programming, which, in turn, relates to one's real world attitudes

about interpersonal relationships. By aiming to connect these levels of analysis, one goal of my research is to provide insight regarding the relationship between interpersonal and mass communication, and how the contexts overlap.

Bridging Reality Television Research and Interpersonal Communication

First, it is important to define what is meant by reality television. Reality television programs "film real people as they live out events (contrived or otherwise) in their lives, as these events occur" (Nabi, Biely, Morgan, & Stitt, 2003, p.304). There are five important elements, characterized by this definition (Nabi et al., 2003). First, people must be portraying themselves. Any program involving an actor playing a role is excluded. Second, the show must be shot in the people's living or working environment, instead of a set. Some might argue that reality programs do utilize sets, but the differences between these sets and previous television show sets are that the items are functional in some reality show sets. Thirdly, there is no script utilized. Individuals are not required to memorize and recite lines, as in traditional television programming. Fourth, events are placed in a narrative context. This would exclude shows like *America's Funniest Home Videos* because there is no narrative thread throughout the show. Lastly, these shows are produced for the purpose of viewer entertainment.

Cherry (2003) conducted a qualitative study to understand the reasons individuals watch reality television programming. Eight interviews were conducted, and a thematic analysis was performed. Following a uses and gratifications approach, Cherry aimed to understand how individuals use the media to satisfy needs and to produce gratifications. Two types of needs were found to be satisfied in the reality television viewing experience. Social gratifications are those that occur from the interaction of others.

Social gratifications occur in face-to-face settings when people get together and converse about the show. Social needs are also satisfied through the development of para-social relationships with characters. Lastly, there is also a connection between the face-to-face level and the mediated level of needs met by the respondents. Respondents also indicated learning some information that they intended to use in their everyday lives. For example, one respondent indicated the intent to use a tactic they saw on one episode of *Survivor* on one of their co-workers. At another level, self-gratifications also occurred. By using reality television programs as a template for an imagined evaluation by another; feelings were expressed by respondents as a result of these imagined evaluations. Therefore, it is clear that Cooley's conception of the "looking-glass self," was found to occur to satisfy these perceptions of oneself. Cooley originally introduced the idea of the "looking-glass self," to explain how individuals develop a sense of self. There are three parts to the formation of the reflected self (Cooley, 1964). First, the individual imagines how they appear to others around them. Second, they interpret other's reactions of their imagined selves. Third, they develop feelings based on the imagined evaluation of others. Therefore, the process of our constant redefining our sense of self occurs when these three stages are complete.

This perspective has some important implications for mass media research (Cherry, 2003). "From Cooley's perspective, individuals who seem unable to 'see' their current bodies may be using reactions of the past as their mirrors on the present. Similarly, the use of TV 'mirrors' in the definition of self and may lead to 'fun house' type distortions," (Ruane & Cerulo, 2000, p. 224). Therefore, we can see the potential for television to act as a different type of "looking-glass self" from our everyday

interpersonal interactions. I expect that reality television provides a unique development of the "looking-glass self" with its use of non-scripted individuals instead of actors.

When discussing agents of socialization, the television is a dominant factor in the equation today (Henslin, 2000). Therefore, individuals learn what it means to be a member of society and also create an individual identity based on messages they receive from this medium. One example was based on Cooley's "looking-glass self" (1964), Cherry (2003) used the term in relation to the media to understand how mass communication contexts overlapped with interpersonal communication contexts. Further research needs to be conducted to understand more about the areas where mass communication and interpersonal communication intersect.

Literature Review

Reality Television Research

Reality television programming has been around since the first broadcast of *Candid Camera* in the late 1940's. It has not been until recently that these types of shows have gained immense popularity. The debut of *Survivor* in 2000 has been credited with beginning the infiltration of reality programming in the current television landscape (Rowen, 2000). Individuals are embracing this genre of television programming as a relatively permanent fixture in television programming. In 2003 the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences added "Best Reality Show" as an Emmy category (Rowen, 2000). This has led to the development of many types of reality programming formats. While the research in this area is relatively limited despite the recent surge in reality programming, in what follows I aim to summarize previous research in this area.

The increase in reality programming is undoubtedly related to with the increasing number of cable channels, which allows advertisers to reach niche markets (Hiebert & Gibbons, 2000). The majority of reality television programming is geared towards the individuals under twenty-five years old (Frank, 2003). MTV has been presenting the *Real World* to this target younger demographic for more than ten years. Frank (2003) suggests that younger viewers are drawn to these shows because they depict characters and situations that are relevant to their everyday lives. However, it was not until the debut of *Survivor* in the year 2000 (Rowen, 2000), that reality television has gained a spot on network primetime television, where the reality genre shows began to target an older demographic (Rowen, 2000). There is a variety of shows that still target the younger demographic, but now there are more shows that target a much wider demographic. For example, network primetime shows such as *The Apprentice* target the 18-49 demographic (Rowen, 2000). Therefore, it is most likely that a greater range of individuals are watching reality television today than in the past.

Nabi et al. (2003) examined the genre of reality television programming itself. Multidimensional space analysis, of all television shows, indicates that reality television is a genre that is distinct from all of the other pre-existing genres; however, not all reality shows should be considered one cohesive genre (Nabi et al., 2003). Two dimensions were found in the analysis, with the first one presented as a continuum as to how suited the programs are for primetime programming. The second dimension is fiction-real. This is a continuum based on whether the programs were portrayed as fictional or realistic based shows. Some "reality" shows were listed as fictional because for some reason, the audience did not perceive the show as realistic (Nabi et al., 2003).

Interestingly, not all reality shows were classified as "reality," and not all fictional shows were classified as “fictional.” Some individuals included shows that were not necessarily reality-based in their definition of reality programming because they perceived the shows as unrealistic (e.g., soap operas). Therefore, when studying reality television it is important to examine the subcategories within this genre. They include: romantic, talent, quiz, and game (Bailey & Barbato, 2003). In this study, I will examine not only reality television viewing as a whole, but also exposure to sub-genres of reality television.

Nabi (2007) used multidimensional scaling to understand the subgroups of reality TV programming. There were two dimensions along which viewers thought about reality TV, romance and competitiveness. Dating programs were found to be a unique type of programming that did not relate to other types. Subgroups of reality programming were found to be fluid and difficult for viewers to separate one from another because of the overlap among the categories. Nabi encourages reality TV researchers to focus on the qualities of the programs and not the categories.

Some research has sought to discover why people watch reality television. Reiss and Wiltz (2004) asked individuals to rate themselves on Reiss's 16 basic life motives and also to report how much they viewed reality programs and how much they enjoyed these shows. Results indicated that the appeal to reality television programs was dependent on the amount of reality television watched. The more reality programs an individual reported liking, the more status-oriented they were, they placed a higher value on vengeance, were more motivated by social life, less motivated by honor, more focused on order, and more concerned with romance. The reality television shows that people prefer to watch are those that stimulate the motives people intrinsically value the most.

For example, if they value romantic relationships, they may prefer to watch *The Bachelor*, of if they value work, they may prefer to watch *The Apprentice*. Therefore, when determining why people watch reality television, we can conclude that they select shows based on their individual values, motives, and desires.

Nabi et al.'s (2003) second study also examined the psychology of the appeal of reality television programming. The hypothesis that individuals enjoy reality television programming for voyeuristic reasons was not fully supported. Individuals indicated that they enjoyed watching other people, but that they were fully aware that the individuals knew they were being watched, which by definition is not voyeuristic. Therefore, Nabi et al. (2003) concluded that people watch reality shows because they enjoy watching real people instead of actors. Further examining the uses and gratifications sought by reality television audiences, Nabi et al. (2003) found that regular viewers watched because they found it entertaining, for the enjoyment of watching another's life, and the self-awareness they receive from these programs. Casual viewers watched because they were bored, or because they enjoyed watching another's life.

Cognitive and emotional predictors of reality TV were examined by Nabi, Stitt, Halford, and Finnerty (2006). Happiness, parasocial relationships, social comparison, self-awareness, negative outcome, and dramatic challenge were related to enjoyment of reality TV. They also found that reality TV appealed less than other genres of TV programming to the audience. This was not because of the negative emotions that it provoked, but the limited ability to evoke positive emotions. Nabi et al. (2006) also determined that perceived reality was not related to enjoyment from viewing reality TV programming. They found that various dimensions of perceived reality were related, but

not as a whole. Further research needs to be conducted to understand the relationship between enjoyment and reality TV viewing.

Hall (2006) conducted focus groups to understand why participants enjoy watching reality TV programming. Participants enjoyed reality shows most because of their humor and suspense. Reality programs were also found to found to fulfill social functions for the viewers. Respondents reported watching with friends and talking with friends about the reality shows they watched. Participants indicated that their view of reality TV programming as realistic was fluid. The criteria were different from show to show and changed as new shows were broadcast. Therefore, perceived reality may be a difficult concept to measure.

Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) examine the gratifications sought from reality TV. Concurrent with previous research, findings indicate that respondents reported watching reality TV mainly to pass the time or for entertainment purposes. The respondents who reported watching for entertainment were most likely to perceive the shows as realistic. Barton (2006) examined reality TV programming and gratifications obtained. Results indicated that the content of the reality show influenced the gratifications obtained. A new gratification that has not been studied was identified in this study, personal utility. This was one of the strongest predictors of overall gratifications obtained. Personal utility refers to the viewer gaining something personally useful from the program. This research provides support for viewers genre-specific programming selection is related to the gratifications obtained. Therefore it is important to understand that the viewers are watching for different reasons. These reasons may lead to differing perception by viewers and thus differing effects. Therefore, I plan to

understand the motives and gratifications sought by reality television viewers by including the television viewing motives scale (Greenberg, 1974).

Individual difference variables have also been found to moderate why people watch reality television. In examining the gratifications received from reality television programming, Nabi et al. (2003) found significant sex differences. Men reported to be more entertained by reality programs and formed parasocial relationships more often than women. However, when examining how the sex of the respondent moderates the effects of reality television programming, Reiss and Wiltz (2004), did not find sex had a significant influence on reality television outcomes. Age has also been found a significant influence on reality television outcomes. Younger viewers reported becoming more self-aware and entertained from watching reality shows, while older viewers reported engaging in social comparisons from viewing (Nabi et al., 2003). Race also had an impact on media use outcomes. Whites were found to identify with the characters, while non-whites were found to learn more information from reality television programming (Nabi et al., 2003). Therefore, I plan to include sex, age, and race as individual difference variables to examine if they moderate the relationship between reality television and interpersonal relationship perceptions.

Perceived reality is a construct that has been important to media researchers, even before the development of reality television. Potter's (1988) conceptual definition of perceived reality is a construct composed of three dimensions. The first dimension is the magic window, which is defined as the "belief in the literal reality of television messages" (p.31). This component deals with how much the viewer believes that the mediated message reflects the outside world. Second, utility is defined as the practicality

of the viewer applying what is viewed on television in their everyday life. It refers to the relevance and degree to which one can relate the information to their own life. Third, identity refers to the identification with a character on television, defined as the degree to which the viewer thinks a character plays a part in the viewers' actual life (Potter, 1988). Magic window, utility, and identity are central to the understanding of a viewer's perception of reality because each of these components will affect a viewer's perceived reality of a television program. Certain shows may create different levels of perceived reality. Each of the three components of perceived reality differs by genre, and even show. These components should be analyzed as to how they affect perceived reality of reality programming. I expect that perceived reality may moderate the relationship between reality television and interpersonal relationship perceptions.

Studying crime reality television programming, such as *America's Most Wanted*, Cavender and Bond-Maupin (1993) examined perceived reality. Based on the choice of story selection, cinematographic techniques, and the claims they make, these programs were found to depict a very real sense of danger to the audience. Crime drama was found to be high in the identity component (Cavender & Bond-Maupin, 1993). The images in these shows allow the viewer to identify with the characters that were presented as victims. The victims were said to possess characteristics that included more people than they excluded. "Participating in reality programs means the audience is part of that reality, making the reality almost indistinguishable from any other aspects of life," (Cavender & Bond-Maupin, 1993). This study suggests that reality programming has a unique form because of the presentation of realistic characters, settings, and plot.

One study examined the perceived reality of reality TV programs. Meng and Lugalambi (2003) found that respondents did not view reality programs as realistic. Perceived plausibility of the program mediated the relationship between the type of program viewed and the perceived utility. The authors argue that the best manner to examine perceived reality is by the degree of personal utility that the viewer receives from the reality program.

Because reality television is a format of programming that is relatively new, there is limited research regarding this genre of television programming. However, the research that exists in this area tells us some important things to guide in the study of this phenomenon. First, reality television lumped together under one umbrella may distort the effects of each sub-genre within reality programming. Second, researchers must take into account the level of commitment of the viewer. Regular viewers have been found to have differing effects than casual viewers (Reiss & Witlz, 2004). Lastly, researchers must understand that individuals watch for different reasons, are motivated by different needs, and thus have different needs satisfied through the watching of this genre of television.

Relationship Perceptions

Romantic relationship perceptions. Romantic relationships are frequently depicted in reality television programming. Romantic relationships are the premise of some shows, such as *Elimi-date*, or are a bi-product of the show, such as *Real World*. Researchers have had difficulty conceptualizing romantic relationship perceptions due to their dynamic, fluid nature. Love has been especially troublesome for researchers to conceptualize, and research does not agree on one specific way to conceptualize it. Researchers cannot even agree if love is an emotion or a process (Shaver & Hazan,

1988). In this study, I will conceptualize love as a fluid communication process that changes from day-to-day and from person-to-person (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). There are many types of love that individuals may express to a variety of different people. However, the types of love have been found to be associated with an individual's attachment style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). An attachment style is a psychological construct that refers to the propensity of an individual to bond with others in a certain manner. This style of bonding is related to the manner in which the individual bonded with his/her primary caregiver as a baby (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). It is expected that this early attachment process influences all future attachments. I will first examine the conceptualization of love as an attachment process, and second how to measure various love styles.

Conceptualizing love as an attachment process grew from research on attachment styles of infants. Bowlby (1973) argued that children develop attachment styles based on the relationship with their primary caregiver as an infant. When separation occurs between a mother and child, a series of behaviors similar to many primates occurs: protest, despair, and detachment (Bowlby, 1973). The manner in which the mother reacts to the child during this separation leads to the development of their attachment style. Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978) found three attachment styles based on Bowlby's (1973) attachment theory. The first attachment style is secure. This occurs when the child is confident that the caregiver will be there when needed. Second, the anxious/ambivalent style is characterized with the individual developing their confidence. The third attachment style, avoidant, is characterized by lived experiences. This involves the perception of responsiveness to one's prior experiences (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters,

and Wall 1978). Hazan and Shaver (1987) found adult versions of these three attachment styles. First, a secure attachment style is indicative of individuals who find it easy to get close to others and trust them. Next, an avoidant attachment style is characterized with uncomfortableness when getting close to others, a lack of trust. Lastly, the anxious/ambivalent style is characterized with the idea that the individual wants to get closer to others than they would like to get with them. This uncertainty is characteristic of the anxious/ambivalent style.

By characterizing love as an attachment process, we can understand different types of love. We can understand romantic love, friendship love, parental love, and other types of love with one concept. This approach also offers a perspective that can examine bonding across one's lifespan (Shaver & Hazan, 1988). This approach is useful in understanding the development of human affectional bonding, and the emotions and behaviors associated with this development, involving attachment.

Another way in which love has been studied has been in terms of love styles. Love styles begin with the work of Lee (1973), who developed a theory of love styles. There are three basic love styles: eros (romantic, passionate love), ludas (game-playing love), and storge (friendship love). These can combine to form compounds, such as mania (dependent love), pragma (logical love), and agape (selfless love); and mixtures such as ludic-eros, storgic-ludus and storgic-eros (Lee, 1973). These love typologies have been utilized in the work of Hendrick and Hendrick (1986, 1989), who found support for each of the love styles in a sample of university students. Shaver and Hazan (1988) argue that these three love styles are characteristic of the three attachment styles previously discussed. First, eros is viewed as similar to the secure attachment style. The

ability to truly open oneself and trust the other individual in romantic love corresponds with the trusting nature of the secure attachment style. Second, ludic love is viewed as similar to the avoidant attachment style. The game-playing nature conceptualized in ludic love corresponds with the uncomfortableness when getting close to others, and a lack of trust of others conceptualized by the avoidant attachment style. Thirdly, mania is viewed as similar to the anxious love style. The dependent nature of the mania love style corresponds with the uncertainty of the anxious love style (Shaver & Hazan, 1988). These love styles seem to relate to and support the research on attachment styles. They also account for a greater variation of love styles than merely three attachment types. Love styles are also important because they incorporate a combination of attachment styles to understand how this leads to one's style of love.

Gender has been found to consistently produce individual differences in love styles. This is most likely due to the differential socialization of men and women regarding love. Females are socialized into a care taking, selfless love style because of their expected mothering roles, whereas men are socialized into a less emotional, more independent style of love (Kimmel & Messner, 2004). Frazier and Esterly (1990) found support for these gender differences in love styles. Men were found to be more ludic and agapic than the women in the sample. While Frazier and Esterly (1990) did not find that women were more pragmatic, storgic, or manic than men, Morrow, Clark, and Brock's (1995) results supported this conclusion. However, other research has found that gender roles are more flexible. Lindsey (1997) reports that men are more open to be care-giving and emotional than they were in the past. Gender roles are becoming less rigid and more flexible.

Sex differences have been examined from two different perspectives, 'different cultures' and 'different experiences.' The 'different culture' approach suggests that men and women have different standards in their relationships. The 'different experience' model suggests that men and women have similar standards in relationships, but different experiences on which to base those standards. Vangelisti and Daly (1999) provide a test of these two perspectives. They found support for the 'different experience' model. Respondents indicated that standards in relationships were rated of similar importance for both men and women. Women were more likely to report that their standards were not fulfilled. Therefore, since men and women reported similar standards, but different experiences, the 'different experience' model was supported.

Sex differences have also been reviewed in the romantic relationship transition. Mongeau, Serewicz, Henningsen, and Davis (2006) examine turning points in young people's transition into dating. Behavioral scripts and expectations for dating were based on one's gender. When it came to paying the bill, providing transportation, and making a sexual move; these scripts were based strictly on one's gender. Even the initiation of the first date was significantly related to one's gender. Men and women were found to desire to have sex for very different reasons. All of these actions are linked to the gendered social role expectations.

Metts (2006) reviewed research on gendered communication in dating relationships. From a social constructionist perspective, Metts discusses how both gender and dating are socially constructed, including scripts and roles. Men and women were found to enjoy romantic relationships for many of the same reasons. Reports of ideal mate qualities were also similar for men and women. The communication style of men

and women were also found to be very similar. However, gendered scripts were found to guide individuals through their gender-defined dating experiences.

Love styles are also important because they have been found to be related to relationship outcome variables. Morrow, Clark, and Brock (1995) found that love scale scores were the best predictor of relationship quality. Those who embraced the eros and agape love styles reported higher levels of rewards, satisfaction, commitment, and investments. They also reported lower levels of costs and poor alternative quality. Ludic love was found to have the opposite effect (Morrow, Clark, & Brock, 1995). Therefore individual's beliefs about love were found to have an effect on their relationships.

The research on love has predominately done in psychology departments. Research on attachment styles and love styles rests on the assumption that individuals seek emotional bonds with others, which begins at birth with the relationship to one's mother. This is important to one's development, but does not take into account other agents of socialization one may experience. Love is a fluid concept that changes over time with one's experiences and perceptions of those experiences (Shaver & Hazan, 1988). Therefore, research needs to be conducted to understand the relationship between love and other influences in one's life. As discussed earlier, mass media channels of communication and interpersonal channels of communication have been found to overlap. The mass media is one context that may influence one's beliefs and perceptions about love throughout one's lifespan.

Machiavellianism. Another variable that may be associated with reality television is machiavellianism, or manipulating others for personal gain (Wilson, Near, & Miller, 1996). Reality television shows such as Survivor depict interpersonal game-playing

strategies to manipulate other people. Other reality shows do so in a more subtle way, such as *Real World. Real World* offers a 'confessional,' where individuals can vent about their 'real' feelings, indicating some amount of interpersonal strategy being portrayed for viewers. Therefore, I would like to examine the relationship between reality television viewing, specifically game-oriented reality shows and machiavellianism.

The concept of machiavellianism originates from a Florentine diplomat, Niccolo Machiavelli, author of the book, 'The Prince.' The book gives advice on how to acquire and stay in power. Christie and Geis (1968) developed machiavellianism as a psychological construct. Machiavellianism is defined, as "a strategy of social conduct that involves manipulating others for personal gain, often against the other's self interest," (Wilson, Near & Miller, 1996). Therefore, individuals are very strategic in their interactions with others. Machiavellianism has been found to be correlated with many other psychological variables such as: use of pro-social techniques (Roloff & Barnicott, 1979), psychological force techniques (Roloff & Barnicott, 1979), self-disclosure (Dingler-Duhon & Brown, 1987), externally oriented thinking (Wastell & Booth, 2003), difficulty in identifying feelings (Wastell & Booth, 2003), psychopathy (McHoskey, Worzel, & Szyarto, 1998), narcissism (McHoskey, 1995), immortality and cynicism (Hansen & Hansen, 1991) and extraversion (Allsopp, Eysenck, & Eysenck, 1991).

The relationship between machiavellianism and genre-specific media exposure has been examined in only two contexts. Firstly, Tamborini, Stiff, & Zillman (1987) found that the machiavellian trait was a good predictor of preference for graphic horror films. Those who preferred horror films also were found to be high on the

machiavellianism construct. Second, Hansen and Hansen (1991) examined the relationship between machiavellianism and preference for punk rock and heavy metal music. The machiavellian trait was significantly correlated with individuals that liked heavy metal, but not significantly correlated with those individuals who liked punk rock. This indicates a genre-specific effect of machiavellianism regarding music style preference. Perhaps this is also the case with strategy-based reality programs. The construct of machiavellianism has not been examined in relationship to television, which is a goal of this study.

Theory

Cultivation Theory

One theory that adds to our understanding of television effects is cultivation theory (Gerbner, 1973). Cultivation posits that storytellers have the power in any society, and television is a unique storyteller. According to cultivation theory, television is so pervasive and inescapable that it provides a unique influence on those individuals that watch frequently, because they do not get many other sources of information. The content that is viewed is not important, but the total number of hours that one is exposed to the television is what matters. This assumes that all shows are uniform in some way because cultivation does not account for the type of shows an individual may watch. Cultivation theory assumes that all television stories are basically the same because they have an underlying, unifying message.

Cultivation theory is an important lens for examining effects of television on audiences; however, there have been critiques leveled against the theory. First is the focus on total television use. This does not account for the content that one chooses to

expose them to. Surely, one who watches crime dramas five hours a day will not have the same effect as someone who watches the game show network five hours a day. The content that one chooses to consume is important to consider. Cultivation scores have been found to correlate with the type of programming that a person is exposed to (Potter & Chang, 1990). Therefore, if individuals mainly watch one genre of programming, they are expected to be influenced by the dominant ideologies of that genre.

Second, it is also important to consider how one watches the television (McQuail, 2000). Is the person intensely watching the show, sitting in front of the television; or is the television merely background noise for other activities the individual may be doing? The way in which a person chooses to interact with the television medium is important too. Cultivation does not account for why or how individuals use television, but only how television shapes viewer's perceptions of the world.

Uses and Gratifications Approach

The uses and gratification approach has an individualistic standpoint. Originally, it examined the purpose that the media use serves for individuals (Rubin, 2002). This is a micro-level approach, focusing explicitly on an individual-level of analysis. Uses and gratifications allows variance for individual differences and examines needs and motivations of viewers when determining the outcome of their media use. This perspective evolved as a reaction to a mechanistic view of media effects. It asked: how does the media influence people (Rubin, 2002)? New questions were being asked such as: how do people use the media? Why do people use the media? Cultivation does not view the audience as actively constructing their viewing experience, but passive

receptacles of mediated messages. In the uses and gratifications approach, the audience is viewed as active.

The uses and gratification approach has four basic assumptions (McQuail, 2000). First, the audience is active in their decisions of media content, and content is selected for a purpose, whether it is to satisfy a goal, motivation, or need. Instead of passive recipients of mediated messages, individuals are empowered when it comes to their relationship with the media. Second, individuals are conscious of their needs and goals, and they base their media viewing preferences on the satisfaction of these needs. The uses and gratifications approach also assumes that individuals are aware of their motivations, and they can report them to a researcher. Individuals are thought to base their media-related needs in terms of motivations (McQuail, 2000). These motivations are thought to arise through individual circumstances as well as social circumstances. The third assumption is that these motivations drive individual media choices more than any other aesthetic or cultural influence. It stresses the importance of the individual, as egocentric in nature, and as individual motivations that are important when examining media decisions. The last assumption is that psychological determinants of media use can be measured. The uses and gratification approach assumes that individuals are conscious of their motivations, and that they can be observed and measured as quantifiable data.

There have been several criticisms leveled against the uses and gratifications approach (Rubin, 2002). First, the approach has been criticized for being too individualistic. The approach does not account for broader cultural and societal influences on individuals. Second, the assumption that audience as active has been

critiqued. The criticism is that we cannot assume that people are active in their media experiences, especially television. There are some people who simply 'veg out' in front of the television, without rationalizing their motivations for media use and what needs the media use is satisfying. The final criticism is methodological. Third, uses and gratifications has been criticized for a lack of clear central constructs. There is no fundamental measure that is consistent across researchers to measure motivations, uses, or gratifications. Each researcher seems to conceptualize and measure these components differently. Despite these criticisms, uses and gratifications provides a useful perspective because it allows us to account for individual differences in effects based on media motives.

Gratification/Cultivation Model

The gratification/cultivation model is a combination of these approaches, and will provide the main theoretical underpinning for my dissertation. Bilandzic and Rossler (2004) developed this approach as a response to the overwhelming evidence for genre-specific cultivation effects. After a review of three distinct genres (crime, soap opera, and talk shows), Bilandzic and Rossler determined that there were differential cultivation effects by genre. For example, viewing crime dramas was more predictive of crime-related attitudes than overall television viewing. The inclusion of genre is an important link between uses and gratification and cultivation.

Schrum (1996, 2001) has conducted several studies that provide evidence for a need to utilize the gratification/cultivation model. Schrum (1996) examined the mediators of cultivation effects. Mediators focus on the how or why specific phenomenon occurs. Accessibility of information was the important variable found to

mediate the cultivation effect between televised social perceptions and real life perceptions of crime, marital discord, and occupations (Schrum, 1996). The study found support for a genre-specific cultivation effect mediated by the psychological variable accessibility of information in one's memory. Moderation was also found to occur since heavy viewers of soap operas were found to answer the cultivation questions faster than very light viewers of soap operas, thus indicating a greater accessibility of information.

Schrum (2001) has also examined moderators of the cultivation effect. Moderators specify under what conditions a phenomenon will take place. Processing strategy was found to moderate the cultivation effects (Schrum, 2001). Even though Schrum (2001) examined total television viewing, not focusing on a specific genre, he found that frequency and recency of activation, the vividness of the information, and the connectedness to other information all moderate cultivation effects. The more frequent, more recent, and more vivid the information was, the more likely that cultivation effects would occur (Schrum, 2001). These different cultivation effects, based on individual psychological construct variables, provide evidence for a gratification/cultivation model.

Bilandzic and Rossler (2004) have developed the gratification/cultivation model to explain differences in the cultivation effect. Cultivation, first, begins with the gratifications that a person seeks to obtain from the television. This, second, leads to exposure to a meta-unit, i.e., a structure in the programming content that is similar across narratives (Bilandzic & Rossler, 2004). Therefore, reality programming can be considered a meta-unit in this study. Then, exposure leads to the gratifications obtained. It is both the gratifications obtained and the encoding and storage of the meta-unit that leads to television world attitudes. Television world attitudes, direct experiences,

personal communication, and other media lead to inferences about the real world. Lastly, it is the retrieval and construction of these real-world inferences that lead to judgments about the real world (Bilandzic & Rossler, 2004).

This model is valuable to my study in several ways. First, it suggests that there are likely to be differing reasons for individuals to watch reality-based programs. Second, it provides the missing link between cultivation effects, and exposure to reality television, perceived reality. This model allows for perceived reality to be examined as a mediator of the cultivation effect. Lastly, the use of the meta-unit allows for the exploration of genre specific cultivation effects. Therefore, the gratification/cultivation model will drive this study.

Research Questions

The gratification/cultivation model is useful for understanding the correlates of reality television viewing, especially relating to interpersonal relationship perceptions. The method that I have utilized is a two-pronged approach. I used both a survey questionnaire and focus group interviews. Each method will answer each of the research questions, but each will answer different aspects of the questions. First, I examined the motives that respondents reported for watching reality television programming. I determined if these motives are related, first, to the watching of reality television, and second, if motives are related to attachment style, love style, and machiavellianism, and then if reality TV exposure are related to attachment style, love style, or machiavellianism. Motives and love styles may be related because I expect that individuals who seek similar gratifications will have more similar outcomes than individuals who seek different gratifications. This leads to my first research questions.

Research Question 1a: What motives predict individuals watching reality television programming?

Research Question 1b: What motives predict love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism?

Research Question 1c: Does exposure to reality TV predict love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism?

The survey answered these questions given the specific motives for watching reality television listed. The motives include reasons that individuals would choose to watch reality television (e.g. enjoyment, boredom, relaxation). Relationships were examined between each motive and scores on the love style, attachment style, machiavellianism, and amount of reality television watched. Then, based on the findings from the survey, focus group questions were created to find out more information about these viewer motives. In the interviews I wanted to find out more about the reality television viewing experience, the context of how individuals watch reality television. This approach provided more depth as to why individuals watch reality television and in what context.

Then, I measured the amount of exposure to the meta-unit, the amount of reality television watched. I expected that the relationship between viewing and effects is strongest for those who believe those programs are real. I examined how perceived reality of reality television programming relates to love styles, attachment styles, and machiavellianism, which leads to my second research question.

Research Question 2: Does perceived reality moderate the relationship between reality television viewing and love styles, attachment styles, and/or machiavellianism?

The survey answered this question using a series of regression equations with the reported scores (reality TV viewing, love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism) as criterion variables. An interaction will also be examined between perceived reality and exposure to reality television. For the focus group interviews, I asked the respondents to tell me about whether they believe the shows are realistic. I also looked at the way in which the respondents talked about reality television; their tone told me if they are talking about it seriously or not.

Unrealistic relationship perceptions may be a possible consequence of watching reality television because of the extreme focus on relationships. Nabi et al. (2003) argues that the sub-genres of reality television must be explored for their differential effects on viewers; therefore, I have included research questions based on the sub-genre of reality programming respondents report watching. Unraveling the relationship between reality television genres and these relationship perceptions leads to my third and fourth research questions.

Research Question 3: Does exposure to relationship-related reality shows predict perceptions of love style and/or attachment style?

Research Question 4: Does exposure to competition-based reality shows predict machiavellianism?

These research questions were answered by the survey and the focus group. In the survey, I examined the correlation between the number of romantic-based shows that the subject reports with the scores on the love style and attachment style scale. Also, the relationship was examined between the number of strategic-based shows and the machiavellianism score. The focus group also helped answer this research question. I asked respondents to talk about shows from each sub-genre of reality programming, and how this may be similar to their own lives. For example, I examined how participants talked about romantic reality shows, and how this may be similar/dissimilar to their own romantic experiences. The focus group helped to get the depth of how people talk about romance or strategic interpersonal relationships.

The next research question examines the process of reality television watching. I aim to uncover how motives drive reality television viewing, and how viewing affects love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism.

> *Research Question 5:* What motives predict reality-TV viewing, and how does reality television viewing predict love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism? In other words, does reality television exposure mediate the relationship between motives and love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism?

The survey answered this question by providing a series of regression equations for each set of variables. In the focus group, I asked respondents to talk about the process of television viewing. What do they expect beforehand? What are they doing during the process of viewing? How do they feel afterward? Who do they talk with about the show? The focus group helped to get at the fluid nature of the viewing process.

By understanding the variables related to the cultivation of relational ideologies, we have a better understanding of the relationship between reality TV and the interpersonal relationship variables: love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism.

Research Question 6: Does interpersonal attraction moderate the relationship between reality television exposure and love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism?

The survey answered this research question by asking the respondent to list a character from a reality show, and then to indicate how much they like the character, are like the character, and want to be like the character. This research question was also answered by the focus group interviews. Respondents were asked to talk about the characters they like and dislike from the reality shows they watch. This helped to determine if interpersonal attraction moderates the relationship between reality television exposure and love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism.

CHAPTER 2: METHODS

Quantitative Method

Design

The data was collected from a pool of participants recruited from several sections of an introductory public speaking course. Participants were offered extra credit for their participation. The participants completed a cross-sectional survey. A power analysis was conducted to determine the number of participants needed uncover any significant difference in the population (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Using a power convention of .80, and an alpha of .05, it was found that 300 participants is the target goal. The estimated effect size was .3, which indicates a medium effect (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). The participants were given the questionnaire in their class. If they wished to participate in the study, they returned the completed questionnaire to the researcher within one week.

After the data analysis, three focus group interviews were conducted to help interpret the results of the study. The questions that were asked derived from the survey results. Some sample questions include: how do you watch reality programming? Do you talk with people about watching this genre of programming? The data were collected from a pool of participants recruited from an upper level communication course. Participants were offered extra credit for their participation.

Survey Participants

The quantitative sample included 406 participants, and was 37% male, and 63% female (see Table 2). Only 17% of the sample considered themselves a feminist, based on a single item demographic question. The sample comprised of 85% whites. The mean year in school was sophomore, with the mean age of 20.1. However, the ages in

the sample ranged from 17 to 60. The average age of the first romantic relationship was 16.8.

Measures

The questionnaire consisted of five main measures: (a) love/attachment style, (b) machiavellianism, (c) media use, (d) perceived realism, and (e) viewer motives. In addition, demographic control variables were included. To see the questionnaire, please refer to Appendix B.

Love attitude measure

First, the study included a measure of attachment style. This measure was utilized from the research of Hazan and Shaver (1987). There are 12 items on the scale, with 4 items measuring each attachment style: secure, avoidant, and anxious. Respondents are asked to rate each of the statements as to how much they agree with them, on a scale of 1 to 5. Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that in their sample, 56 percent of students reported a secure attachment style, 25 percent reported an avoidant style, and 19 percent reported an anxious style. 'I find it relatively easy to get close to others,' and 'I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others,' are example statements on the scale.

After the data was collected attachment style was examined. First, a reliability analysis was conducted. The sub-scale 'secure' had the lowest reliability (*alpha* =.52)[3]. However the avoidant attachment style (*alpha* =.71) and anxious (*alpha* =.71) style reliability were deemed acceptable. See Table 3. Each of these three attachment styles were analyzed as separate variables, avoidant (*M*=2.73), anxious (*M*=2.56), and secure (*M*=3.47).

Second, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the 12 attachment style items. Levine (2006) recommends using confirmatory factor analysis instead of an exploratory factor analysis when working with an established scale. The results showed that the factor structure did replicate the scale categories of secure, avoidant, and anxious. See Figure 1. The secure attachment style was negatively related to both the anxious (r=-.70) and the avoidant style (r = -1.02). The anxious and avoidant styles were positively related to each other (r = .44). The secure factor was found to be a better fit with one of the items deleted, therefore the secure variable is based on three items from the scale, while anxious and avoidant are based on four items from the scale. All diagnostics fell within the appropriate parameters: x^2 (N = 435) = 3.38, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .07. These indicate an appropriate fit between the data and the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999)

Second, the Love Attitude Scale measures love style. This scale was developed by Hendrick and Hendrick (1986), and was based on Lee's (1973) six love styles. Originally, the scale had 42 items. More recently, Hendrick, Hendrick, and Dicke (1998) have developed a short version of the questionnaire that has "even stronger psychometric properties than the original scale" (p.147). Therefore, I have included the three item short form of the Love Attitude Scale. There are 18 eighteen items total, with three items for each of the six types of love. The scale provides statements about relationships, and respondents are asked to answer about their current relationship partner. If they are not currently in relationship, they are asked to respond based on their last serious relationship. If they have never been in a serious relationship, then they will be asked to respond based on an imagined relationship. Respondents are asked to indicate the degree to which they agree with the various statements, on a scale of 1 to 5. 'I feel that my

partner and I were meant for each other,' and 'I would rather suffer than let my partner suffer,' are some example statements.

A reliability analysis was conducted on the love style subscales. Eros (*alpha* =.63), pragma (*alpha* =.63), mania (*alpha* =.54), and agape (*alpha* =.65) were not highly reliable subscales. Ludas (*alpha* =.71) and storge (*alpha* =.88) were found to be reliable subscales. Deletion of a particular question did not enhance the reliability of the scale. Each of these six love styles were analyzed as separate variables, ludas (*M* =2.38), storge (*M* = 3.20), pragma (*M*=2.92), mania (*M*=3.05) , agape (*M*=3.23) , and eros (*M*=3.74).

Second, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the 18 love style items. The results showed that the factor structure did replicate the scale categories of ludas, storge, pragma, mania, agape, and eros. See Figure 3. Ludas love style was negatively related to pragma (*r*=-.03), storge (*r*=-.20), eros (*r*=-.23), and agape (*r* = -.06). Mania and storge were also negatively related (*r* = -.04). The other relationships between love styles were positive. All diagnostics fell within the appropriate parameters: x^2 *(N* = 435) = 2.39, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06. These indicate an appropriate fit between the data and the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Machiavellianism measure

The majority of studies have utilized the Mach IV or Mach V. However, I have chosen not to use this measure because research has indicated that this measure is not a unidimensional construct, but a reflection of four subscales: deceit, flattery, immorality, and cynicism (O'Hair & Cody, 1987). In response, Allsopp, Eysenck, and Eysenck (1991) have developed a new measure. This measure is shorter, and has been deemed more internally consistent than the Mach IV (Mudrack & Mason, 1995). Scores on the

Mach IV were highly correlated with those on the Alsopp et al. (1991) scale (Mudrack & Mason, 1995). Therefore, I have chosen to use the ten-item Alsopp et al. (1991) scale. Respondents are asked the degree to which they agree with ten statements about relationships, on a five-point scale. 'I enjoy manipulating people,' and 'I would like to be very powerful,' are some example statements. Machiavellianism was reliable (*alpha* =.87) and was calculated by creating an average of the ten items (*M*=2.11).

Media use variables

Content assessment of reality programming- April 2004. When I decided to study genres of reality television, I deemed it important to assess the content of current reality programming. Based on the television programming in April 2004 I listed all of the reality programming on expanded basic cable airing in Columbia, Missouri. I determined that reality programming was programming that was unscripted where people acted as themselves, not as another character (Nabi et al., 2003). Seventy-five shows on 17 different channels were considered reality programming by this definition. See Appendix A for a complete listing. Next, I categorized the shows into various sub-genres. The first major distinction between the shows was based on the entire premise of the show, either competition or documentary. The premise of the competitive shows was that there was some sort of contest, and either by the end of the show, or season, someone was the winner, and the other contestants were losers. The contestants seem very aware of the camera in this situation, utilizing a third-person camera approach. Twenty-five shows were found to be competition-based. The second style, the documentary, did not consist of these contrived situations. It utilized the fly-on-the wall camera approach and it seems as if the characters are unaware of the camera, they are just acting as they would. The

documentary approach does not have a winner or loser in the end, but aims to inform the audience about the lives of others. Fifty shows were found to be documentary style.

Further examination of the categories indicates that they can be broken down into one more sub-grouping within each category. There are three subdivisions in the competition sub-genre: romantic (7 shows), talent (9 shows), and game (9 shows). Romantic competitions involved competing for either a date or the heart of another individual (e.g., *Elimi-date, The Bachelorette*). Talent competitions are based on some skill that one may have that most others do not (e.g., *American Idol, Next Top Model*). The last category of competition is game. These are competitions that are not based on a particular skill, and are not romantic in nature. These are competitions that the average viewer could most likely participate in (e.g., *Fear Factor, Boiling Points*). The documentary style shows can further be broken down into two categories: problem-solving (17 shows) and everyday life (33 shows). This subdivision is also based on the premise of the shows. Problem-Solving documentaries are given some task to accomplish by the end of the show. These shows are filmed as if the camera is merely watching someone accomplish a task (e.g., *Super Nanny, Trading Spaces*). The final category is everyday life documentaries. These shows are just providing an example of what it would be like to live in a certain manner. The camera generally follows around a person, or group of people in an unobtrusive manner (e.g., *Osbournes, Cops*).

Categorizing the shows prior to participants completing the survey allows for several advantages. First, I can use these categories to determine how much television of each genre the individual is watching. This will be useful to answer my research questions based on sub-genres. Second, I can perform a cluster analysis of the shows that

individuals report watching to determine if my categorization of shows is representative. I have also recorded the channel of each show, to determine if the channel of show may also form a useful cluster.

The content assessment that I performed of sub-genres of reality TV programming was not found to be a valid measure of types of reality TV viewing. First, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted, based on its strength to create a conceptual structure. The cluster analysis indicated three main factors. See Figure 2. Many of the items clustered onto the first category. Thirty-five items comprised the first cluster. It was difficult to determine how these items clustered, but I believe that they clustered according to their target audience. The first category contains shows on a variety of channels, but all of the shows seem to target a variety of age groups. Examples include: *Cheaters, Baby Story,* and *Nanny 911.* The second cluster only contained two shows, *American Idol* and Extreme *Home Makeover.* These shows are both on network TV and are targeted toward an older demographic. The final cluster contained 19 shows. These shows are targeted toward a younger demographic. Many of these shows air on the MTV network, and target teenagers and young adults. *Cribs, Osbornes*, and *Boiling Points* are included in the cluster. These three clusters were interesting, but did not contain useful categories for determining sub-genres of reality TV.

Then, a factor analysis was performed on the 62 items using principal-components extraction with varimax rotation. The number of factors extracted was based on the examination of a scree plot and the requirement that eigenvalues were greater than 1.0. The criterion for factor loadings was set at .40. The factor analysis yielded five factors, which accounted for 35.5% combined variance. Factor 1 contained 11 items

(*Made, Newlyweds, Next Top Model, PowerR girls, Real World, I Want a Famous Face, Making the Band, My Super Sweet 16, Gastineau Girls, Real World/Road Rules Challenge, and The Ashlee Simpson Show*) with loadings ranging from .48 to .80. Factor 1 explained 11.6% of the variance, and is labeled documentary-everyday life. Factor 2 contained 7 items (*Baby Story, Dating Story, Makeover Story, Perfect Proposal, Second Chance, Wedding Story*, and *Trading Spaces*) with loadings ranging from .49 to .84. Factor 2 explained 7.9% of the variance, and is labeled traditional sex-role shows. Factor 3 contained 3 items (*5th Wheel, Blind date,* and *Elimi-date*) with loadings ranging from .72 to .79. Factor 3 explained 5.5% of the variance, and is labeled half-hour network dating shows. Factor 4 contained 6 items (*Dream Job, Fear Factor, Jackass, Punk'd, Osbournes,* and *Pimp my Ride*) with loadings ranging from .47 to .70. Factor 4 explained 5.5% of the variance, and is labeled male oriented shows. Factor 5 contained 5 items (*Supernanny, Wife Swap, Nanny 911*, *Trading Spouses,* and *Intervention*) with loadings ranging from .58 to .79. Factor 5 explained 5.1% of the variance, and is labeled domestic-oriented shows. These five factors were the categories of sub-genres that I used in this analysis.

Media use variables. Next, the survey contained questions regarding media use. This section utilizes ten categories as established by Nabi et al. (2003) to determine exposure to genres of television programming. First, respondents were asked the number of hours that they watched each genre of programming last week. Then, they were asked to rank order the ten genres of programming in the order that if they were to go home this evening and watch television, which would they select to watch. Finally, respondents were asked to indicate the number of regular television programs, in each genre, that they

view regularly. These categories are included to determine genre-specific cultivation effects (Bilandzic & Rossler, 2004). Also, total television viewing time was measured by asking respondents how many hours they watched television last week (weekdays only), last weekend, and yesterday. These measures were used to examine a possible cultivation effect. Next, a question was included for the respondent to list their three favorite reality programs. Also, the respondents were provided a list of reality television programs and were asked to indicate how often they watched each show. This was used to indicate the genre of reality programming that the respondent is most likely to view.

To measure reality TV viewing, 'listavg' was created. This variable was created by calculating an average of the number of reality shows that an individual reported watching from the list of seventy-five provided in the survey. This measure was highly correlated with the other measures of reality TV viewing included on the survey, which asked the respondents to self-report the amount of hours per week they watched.

Lastly, the development of parasocial relationships with reality television characters was measured utilizing the manner in which Hoffner and Cantor (1991) measured parasocial relationships with media characters. Respondents were asked to indicate their three favorite reality television characters. Then on a five-point scale they were asked how much they like the character, are like the character, and want to be like the character. This assessed which characters they identify with. Interpersonal attraction was calculated by summing the number of favorite characters listed by the respondent. This scale was found to be reliable (alpha =.94). Scale-if-item-deleted was examined, and deleting any of the items did not increase the reliability, so they were used in full.

Perceived realism

Thirdly, the perceived realism scale (Rubin, 1981) was included. Perceived realism is defined as the degree to which the respondent's judgments about the depictions they view on television are viewed as true-to-life (Rubin, 1981). The scale includes five items, and respondents are required to indicate the degree to which they agree with those statements, on a scale of 1-5. This scale is used both for total television experience, as well as specifically directed towards reality television programming. This scale has been found to have a reliability of .85 (Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985). Perceived reality of reality TV was calculated by creating an average of the five items on the scale, and was found reliable (alpha =.79).

Viewer motives

As discussed earlier, the viewer's uses and gratifications regarding television are important to the genre-specific cultivation outcome. Therefore, I have included the television viewing motives scale (Greenberg, 1974). Motives are defined as reasons for engaging in the act of television viewing. I asked participants to indicate their motives for watching television and also their motives specifically for watching reality-based television. On a scale of 1-5, respondents were asked the degree to which they agree with the reason provided for watching television. There are 27 questions in total, three for each factor. The nine factors include: relaxation, companionship, habit, pass time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape. Although this list may not include all of the reasons one may watch television, or reality programming, these have been many of the reasons most reported to researchers (Rubin, 1981).

Motives for reality TV viewing were first examined by calculating the reliabilities for the nine subscales from Greenburg (1974): relaxation (*alpha* =.84), companionship

(*alpha* =.79), habit (*alpha* =.67), pass time (*alpha* =.79), entertainment (*alpha* =.91), social interaction (*alpha* =.79), information (*alpha* =.83), arousal (*alpha* =.83), and escape (*alpha* =75). Many of the sub-categories were highly correlated so a factor analysis was conducted to determine if the data dictate different categories.

A factor analysis was performed on the 27 viewer motive items using a principal-components extraction with varimax rotation. The number of factors extracted was based on the examination of a scree plot and the requirement that eigenvalues were greater than 1.0. The criterion for factor loadings was set at .40. The factor analysis yielded four factors, which accounted for 64.0% combined variance. Factor 1 contained 10 items (watching reality TV because it is entertaining, enjoyable, exciting, amusing, something to do with friends, stimulating, just because I like to watch, so I can talk with other people about the show, so I can be with other people who are watching, and to cheer oneself up) with loadings ranging from .57 to .80. Factor 1 explained 24.7% of the variance and is labeled positive outcomes. Factor 2 consisted of 5 items (watching reality TV to avoid being alone, when there is no one lese to be with, so I can get away from others, to feel less lonely, and so I could learn about what could happen) with loading ranging from .61 to .76. Factor 2 explained 14.3% of the variance, and is labeled interpersonal outcomes. Factor 3 consisted of 5 items (watching reality TV because it is relaxing, to forget about things, to unwind, to rest, and to get away from what one is doing) and with loadings between .50 at .75. Factor 3 explained 13.0% of the variance, and is labeled relaxation/escape outcomes. Factor 4 consisted of 4 items (watching reality TV because it is there, when there is nothing better to do, it passes the time when I am bored, and it gives me something to do to occupy my time) and with loadings

between .63 at .81. Factor 4 explained 12.0% of the variance, and is labeled passing the time outcomes. Each of these four factors: positive outcomes, interpersonal outcomes, relaxation/escape, and passing the time outcomes were used in this research as the motives for reality TV viewing.

Control variables

Lastly, demographic information were collected. Respondents were asked their year in school, age, sex, and race. Then they were asked to classify their hometown as rural, urban, suburban, or other. Next, to get an approximate measure of class, the respondents were asked if their mother and their father have a college degree. These items were combined, as a rough measure of class. Lastly, respondents were asked if they are currently involved in a romantic relationship, and the age of their first serious romantic relationship, as these may be factors related to differing relational ideologies.

To keep the analysis consistent, the same demographic variables will be used throughout. Four demographic variables were correlated with many of the variables consistently: age, race, sex, and feminist status. Age was included as a continuous variable, measured in number of years. Race was recoded as a dummy variable due to the homogeneity of the racial composition of the sample (white=1, all other races=0). Sex was also coded as a dummy variable (1=male, 0=female). Feminist status was also coded as a dummy variable (1=feminist, 0=not a feminist). The 'not a feminist' category was created by combining the 'not a feminist' responses and the 'don't know' responses. The demographic variables that were most significantly related to this analysis are age, race, sex, and feminist status.

Analysis

Surveys were collected and entered into a SPSS file. Descriptive statistics for all of the variables were examined. Research Question 1A utilized a regression equation with exposure to reality TV as the criterion variable. Motives for watching reality TV was the predictor variable. Demographics were entered as control variables. Research Question 1B also utilized regression equations. Three equations were conducted for each of the criterion variables: love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism. Similar to 1A, reality TV viewing motives were entered as predictor variables, and demographic variables as controls. Research question two examined whether perceived reality is a mediator between viewing and relationship perception variables. A perceived reality score was calculated by summing the score on the perceived reality questions. Regression equations were examined for each of the criterion variables: attachment, love style, and machiavellianism. These variables were also calculated by summing the participant's responses on the corresponding scale. The three predictor variables were the exposure to reality TV, perceived reality, and the interaction between exposure to reality TV and perceived reality. Demographic variables acted as control variables.

To answer the third research question, two regression equations were calculated, one for love style and one for attachment style. Exposure to romantic shows acted as a predictor variable. The total score of the participant's responses on the seven romantic-genre shows comprised the romantic programming variable. Demographics were entered as control variables. A similar method was utilized to answer research question four. The same regression equation was used as research question three, except machiavellianism became the criterion variable. Nine game-reality shows were found,

and the participant's responses to these shows were summed for an overall game/strategy variable.

Research question five used a series of three regressions for each set of variables. The first equation used reality TV viewing as the criterion and reality TV viewing motives as the predictor variable. Demographics acted as control variables. The second equation used love style, attachment style and machiavellianism as criterion variables and the exposure to reality TV as a predictor variable. Demographics and motives acted as controls. In the last regression equation love style, attachment style and machiavellianism were entered as criterion variables, and reality TV viewing motives acted as predictor variables, and exposure to reality and demographic variables were entered as control variables. The sixth research question was also answered with regression equations. Regression equations were examined for each of the criterion variables: attachment, love style, and machiavellianism. The three predictor variables were the exposure to reality TV, interpersonal attraction, and the interaction between exposure to reality TV and interpersonal attraction. Demographic variables acted as control variables.

Qualitative Method

After the data was collected and analyzed focus group interviews were conducted to help explain the results of the survey. The methodological stance under which this research is taking place is from an interpretive perspective. This assumes that reality is socially constructed and as researchers, we can analyze and interpret specified social artifacts, (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). For this proposed study, the social artifact that will

be studied is individual discourse, and the method of generating this discourse is focus group interviewing.

Fifteen participants were selected via recruitment from an upper level communication class. These students received extra credit for their participation in this study. To be included as a participant in this study, the researcher required that the individuals consider themselves regular viewers of some currently airing reality television show. I assessed individuals who watch a variety of reality programs, as to utilize a variety of perspectives about reality television. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 26 with a mean age of 21, with nine females and six males. The fifteen participants were divided up into three separate focus group sessions. The first focus group had 4 participants, the second had 5 participants, and the third had 6 participants. The interviews lasted approximately forty-five minutes each.

Focus group interviews occurred in a conference room setting. Interviews were videotape recorded by the researcher. The video recorder was set in open view of the respondents and I reminded them that their conversation would be video recorded. At the beginning of each interview I introduced myself and explained the purpose and procedure of the focus group interview. Then I told respondents that I wanted to generate a list of reality TV programs that they have watched. I wrote on the chalkboard as they dictated the list of many different programs. Having the names written on the chalkboard was useful because it served as a visual cue for respondents to talk about various shows during the interview.

I followed a research guide that allowed for a productive conversation to occur relating to the previous research questions. For a copy of the interview guide, see

Appendix C. The guide was followed but the order of questions was different for each group depending how they fit in with the respondents' conversation. The questions asked respondents to discuss their favorite shows, motives for watching, and the messages they thought reality TV portrayed about relationships.

After transcribing the interviews, I read over them several times. A thematic analysis was conducted; data were analyzed to determine if any common patterns emerge regarding reality television. The thematic analysis included three parts: reduction, explanation, and theory (Lindlof, 1995). First, data were categorized. I put each theme that emerged from the analysis on index cards. I arranged the cards based on their relation to the other themes. Several overarching themes emerged and the sub-themes were also easy to see. Next, I identified and explained common features within those categories. I wanted to understand the depth of each category and how these themes related to reality TV viewing. Finally, those themes were interpreted based on the gratification/cultivation perspective. I wanted to understand the link between the perceptions that individuals report bringing to the experience with those that they reported taking away from the experience.

I also utilized verification procedures. At the suggestion of Cresswell (1997), several methods of verification were be used. The first method is that of negative case analysis. Cases that do not seem typical of other findings were set aside and the researcher dialogued with those particular cases to determine what makes them different from other cases. Second, the researcher clarified the researcher's bias. The researcher bracketed the potential bias that may infiltrate the results before the data was collected. Any additional bias that arose during the study was added as the study progressed.

CHAPTER 3: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Research Question 1a: What viewing motives predict individuals watching reality television programming?

First, bivariate correlations were examined between the motive variables and the measure of reality television viewing. The reality television viewing variable was an average of the number of reality TV shows that individuals indicated viewing from the predetermined list. All correlations were significant and positive. The correlations were highest for the positive outcomes ($r = .62$), and relaxation outcomes ($r = .47$), followed by passing the time outcomes ($r = .36$), and interpersonal outcomes ($r = .28$). See Table 4.

Next, a hierarchical regression was conducted. The criterion variable was the amount of reality television viewed. The first block included the control variables: race, sex, age, and feminist status. The second block included the motive variables. The control variables accounted for 10.4% of the variance in reality television viewing. However, the motive variables accounted for 42.1% of the variance in reality TV viewing. The second block contributed more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .32$). Motives, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (386,8) = 26.42, $p < .05$). Therefore, the addition of the motives variables adds to explaining the variance of reality TV viewing. Both regression steps were significant (Step 1: F (4, 395) = 12.62; $p < .001$; Step 2: F (8, 391) = 37.22, $p < .001$). See Table 6.

Further examining the contribution of each variable, we see that sex, race, and feminist status were significant predictors of reality TV viewing, but age was not. In the

second step, these same control variables remained significant. Being white, male, and a feminist are all negative predictors of reality TV viewing. Positive outcomes and interpersonal outcomes were found to be significant predictors of reality TV viewing, but relaxation and passing time outcomes were not found to be significant.

In sum, adding the block of motives did enhance the variance explained in the model. Positive outcomes significantly predicted reality TV viewing, while interpersonal outcomes negatively predicted reality TV viewing. Relaxation outcomes and passing the time outcomes were not found to significantly predict reality TV viewing. Therefore, we can conclude that viewers who watch for positive outcomes will watch more reality TV and those who watch for interpersonal outcomes tend to watch less.

Research Question 1b: What viewing motives predict love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism?

The correlations between viewing motives, love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism were examined. Interpersonal outcome motives were positively correlated with love styles (ludas, $r = .13$; storge, $r = .10$, pragma, $r = .23$, mania, $r = .25$, and agape, $r = .10$), attachment styles (anxious, $r = .19$; avoidant, $r = .10$), and machiavellianism ($r = .19$). See Table 4. Passing the time motives were positively correlated with love styles (pragma, $r = .16$, mania, $r = .18$). The positive motive variable was negatively correlated with the avoidant attachment style ($r = -.13$), and positively correlated with pragma ($r = .20$) and mania ($r = .15$). The relaxation outcome variable was positively correlated with the storge love style ($r = .12$), pragma ($r = .13$) and mania ($r = .13$).

Several hierarchical regressions were conducted to further examine these relations. In all of the following models, the control variables (age, sex, race, and feminist status) were entered in block one, and the motive variables were entered in the second block. First, the ludas love style was examined as a criterion variable. Again, the step including the motives explained more variance (3%) than the control variables (2%), but the second block did not contribute significantly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .01$). Motives, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model ($F(420,8) = .64$, $p > .05$). Both steps were significant (Step 1: $F(4, 429) = 2.28$, $p < .05$; Step 2: $F(8, 425) = 2.55$, $p <. 01$). See Table 7. Race and sex were the only control variables that were significant in either model. Being white was a negative predictor of ludas, whereas being male was a positive predictor. None of the motive variables were significant predictors of ludas.

Next, storge was examined as the outcome variable. The model with the added motive variables did not enhance the explained variance on storge. Both steps explained just 2% of variance, and were significant (Step 1: $F(4, 430) = 2.70$, $p <. 05$; Step 2: $F(8, 426) = 2.06$, $p <. 05$). The second block did not contribute more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .00$). Motives, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model ($F(421,8) = .23$, $p > .05$). See Table 7. The only variables that were significant in either model were age and race. Being white and older were both negative predictors of the storge love style.

Then, the eros love style was examined as a criterion variable. Both steps explained less than one percent of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .00$). Motives, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model ($F(422,8) = -1.05$, $p > .05$). Neither

step was significant (Step 1: F (4, 435) = .60; p > .05: Step 2: F (8, 435) = .88; p >. 05). See Table 7. None of the predictors were significant in the model.

Next, the pragma love style was examined as a criterion variable. The first step explained 2% of the variance; which was less than the 7% explained by the second step. The second block contributed significantly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .05$). Motives, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (422,8) = 3.08, p < .05). Both steps were significant (Step 1: F (4, 435) = 3.19; p < .05: Step 2: F (8, 435) = 5.37; p <. 001). See Table 7. Interpersonal motives and positive motives were positively related to pragma, while relaxation motive was negatively related to pragma. Being male negatively predicted the pragma love style.

Also, the mania love style was examined as a criterion variable. The first step explained 0% of the variance; which was less than the 6% explained by the second step. The second block contributed significantly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .06$). Motives, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (421,8) = 3.59, p < .05). The first step was not significant, but the second step was (Step 1: F (4, 434) = .65; p > .05: Step 2: F (8, 434) = 4.54; p <. 001). See Table 7. Interpersonal motives and passing the time motives were positively related to mania.

Then, the agape love style was examined as a criterion variable. The first step explained 10% of the variance; which was less than the 12% explained by the second step. ($\Delta R^2 = .02$). Motives, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (420,8) = 1.13, p > .05). Both steps were significant (Step 1: F (4, 433) = 13.31; p < .001: Step 2: F (8, 433) = 8.47; p <. 001). See Table 7. Interpersonal

outcomes was positively related to agape. Also, being a white, male was a positive predictor of the agape love style.

Also, the secure attachment style was examined as a criterion variable. The first step explained 1% of the variance; which was less than the 5% explained by the second step. The second block contributed significantly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .04$). Motives, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (416,8) = 2.01, $p <$ .05). The first step was not significant, but the second step was (Step 1: F (4, 429) = 2.08; $p > .05$: Step 2: F (8, 429) = 3.65; $p <$. 001). See Table 6. The only motive that was a significant, positive predictor of the secure style was the interpersonal motive variable.

Then, the avoidant attachment style was entered as a criterion variable. The second step accounted for 7% of the variance, whereas, the first step barely accounted for 1% of the variance in the avoidant attachment style. The second block contributed significantly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .06$). Motives, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (419,8) = 3.36, $p < .05$). The first step was not significant; but the second step was significant (Step 1: F (4, 428) = 1.59; $p > .10$: Step 2: F (8, 424) = 4.74; $p <$. 001). See Table 6. In the first step, race was the only significant predictor of the avoidant attachment style. Being white negatively predicted the avoidant attachment style. Race was also the only control variable found to be significant in the second step, with the same effect. Interpersonal motives and passing the time motives were positive, significant predictors of the attachment style. Positive outcomes were found to have a negative association, and relaxation outcomes had no significant influence on the avoidant attachment style.

Also, the anxious attachment style was examined as a criterion variable. The first step explained 3% of the variance; which was less than the 7% explained by the second step. The second block contributed significantly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .04$). Motives, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (419,8) = 2.24, $p <$ .05). Both steps were significant, (Step 1: F (4, 428) = 3.79; $p < .05$: Step 2: F (8, 424) = 4.77; $p <$. 001). See Table 6. In both models being a feminist and being male were positive predictors of an anxious attachment style. The only motive that was a significant, positive predictor of the anxious style was the interpersonal motive variable.

Finally, the machiavellianism score was entered as the criterion variable. The second step accounted for 14% of the variance, which explained more variance than the first step, which only accounted for 8%. The second block contributed significantly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .06$). Motives, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (413,8) = 3.35, $p < .05$). Both of the steps were significant (Step 1: F (4, 422) = 10.26; $p <$. 001; Step 2: F (8, 418) = 9.39; $p <$. 001). See Table 6. Age was marginally significant in the first step, but not the second. Sex was a consistent predictor in both steps, being male was a positive predictor of machiavellianism. The positive outcome variable was not found to be a significant predictor, but the other three motive variables were significant. Interpersonal outcomes and passing the time outcomes positively predicted machiavellianism, whereas relaxation outcomes were negatively associated with machiavellianism score.

In sum, hierarchical regression results indicated that interpersonal motives positively predicted machiavellianism, while relaxation outcomes were negative predictors. Interpersonal outcomes also positively predicted the anxious and avoidant

attachment style. Passing the time outcome positively predicted the avoidant attachment style and positive outcomes negatively predicted the avoidant attachment style. For storge and ludas love styles motives did not significantly predict them. But interpersonal outcomes positively related to agape, but negatively related to the secure attachment style. Both positive outcomes anf interpersonal outcomes were positive predictors of pragma, but relaxation outcomes negatively related to it. Both interpersonal motives and passing the time motives positively related to a manic love style.

Research Question 1c: Does reality TV viewing predict love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism?

First bivariate correlations were examined between reality TV viewing and attachment style, love style, and machiavellianism. Neither machiavellianism nor either attachment style (avoidant, secure, or anxious) was related to reality TV viewing. However, love styles were positively correlated with reality TV viewing. Ludas (r = .13), storge (r = .09), eros (r = .11), pragma (r = .17), and mania (r = .15) were significantly correlated with reality TV viewing. See Table 5.

Hierarchical regressions were conducted to further understand these relations. In this set of regression equations, block one included the control variables (age, race, sex, feminist status, and overall TV viewing) and the measure of reality television viewing. First, ludas was examined as the criterion variable. The model explained 5% of the variance. The model was significant (F (6, 396) = 4.13, p < .001). See Table 8. Sex was a significant predictor, being male was positively associated with ludas. Feminist status was also significant; indicating that being a feminist was positively associated with ludas love style. Reality TV viewing was a significant, positive predictor of ludas love style.

Storge was the second love style that was examined as the criterion variable. The model explained 3% of the variance. The model was significant (F (6, 397) = 2.84, $p <$ .05). See Table 8. The significant predictors were race and overall TV viewing, and both were found to have a negative association with storge. Being white and watching large amounts of television were negative predictors of storge. Reality TV viewing was not found to predict storge.

Next, eros was examined as the criterion variable. The model explained 2% of the variance. The model was not significant (F (6, 404) = 2.00, $p > .05$). See Table 8. Reality TV viewing was not found to predict eros. Then, pragma was examined as the criterion variable. The model explained 5% of the variance. The model was significant (F (6, 404) = 4.48, $p < .001$). See Table 8. Overall TV viewing negatively predicted pragma, but reality TV viewing was found to positively predict pragma. Also, mania was examined as the criterion variable. The model explained 2% of the variance. The model was not significant (F (6, 403) = 1.99, $p > .05$). See Table 8. Reality TV viewing was not found to predict mania. Agape was the last love style entered as a criterion variable. The model explained 11% of the variance. The model was significant (F (6, 402) = 9.51, $p < .001$). See Table 8. Overall TV viewing and reality TV viewing were not found to predict pragma. Being a white male was positively related to the agape love style.

Next, attachment styles were examined. Entering the avoidant attachment style as the criterion variable did produce a significant model. The model explained 3% of the variance, and was significant (F (6, 395) = 2.86, $p < .05$). See Table 9. Overall TV viewing was a significant, positive predictor of the avoidant style. Sex was a negative predictor of the avoidant style. Being male was negatively associated with the avoidant

attachment style. Reality TV viewing was a significant, negative predictor of the avoidant style. The more reality TV they watch, the less likely they are to have an avoidant attachment style.

When examining the anxious attachment style, a significant model was produced. However, reality TV viewing was not significant. The model explained 3% of the variance (F (6, 395) = 2.90, $p < .01$). See Table 9. Both sex and feminist status were positive, significant predictors of the anxious attachment style. Being male and also being a feminist were found to positively predict an anxious attachment style, but the amount of reality TV viewing did not predict an anxious attachment style. Then, secure was examined as the criterion variable. The model explained 2% of the variance. The model was significant (F (6, 400) = 2.50, $p < .05$). See Table 9. Overall TV viewing negatively predicted secure, but reality TV viewing was found to positively predict the secure attachment style.

Finally, machiavellianism was examined as the criterion variable. The model was significant with 11% of the variance explained. (F (6, 389) = 9.08, $p < .001$). See Table 9. Age and sex were significant control variable predictors in both models. Being male was a positive predictor of machiavellianism, and age was a negative predictor. The younger an individual, the more machiavellianism they exhibit. Reality TV viewing was found to be a positive predictor of machiavellianism. The more reality TV that one watches, the more machiavellian they are.

In sum, although bivariate correlations indicated a positive correlation between ludas and storge love styles and reality TV viewing, hierarchical regressions indicated that reality TV viewing was a positive, significant predictor of ludas love style and

machiavellianism. Reality TV viewing was found to be a negative predictor of the avoidant attachment style, but reality TV viewing was not found to predict storge, eros, pragma, mania, or agape love styles or the anxious or secure attachment style.

Research Question 2: Does perceived reality moderate the relationship between reality television viewing and love styles, attachment styles, and/or machiavellianism?

Several hierarchical regression models were conducted determine if a moderation effect exists. In all of the models, reality TV viewing was entered in the first block. The second block included the measure of perceived reality of reality TV, and the third block included the interaction between perceived reality and reality TV viewing.

The first criterion variable was ludas love style. The first two blocks explained only 1.3% of the variance in ludas, and adding the interaction term actually explained less variance (1.1%). See Table 10. Reality TV viewing was not a significant predictor of perceived reality of reality TV viewing, but block two was significant (Step 2: F (2, 399) = 3.68, $p < .05$). However, block 3 failed to produce a significant result at the 95% criterion level (Step 3: F (3, 398) = 2.45, $p < .10$). When examining the interaction term, it was not found to be a significant predictor in the model.

Storge, as the second criterion variable, did not produce a significant equation. Each model explained less than 1% of the variance. None of the three blocks produced a significant result (Step 1: F (1, 401) = 3.58, $p < .10$; Step 2: F (2, 400) = 2.06, $p > .10$; Step 3: F (3, 399) = 1.39, $p > .10$). See Table 10. Perceived reality was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and storge.

Then the eros love style was entered as a criterion variable. The first two block explained only 1.3% of the variance, anfd the second block explained 1.6% and adding the interaction term explained 1.7% of the variance in the eros love style. See Table 10. Reality TV viewing was a significant predictor of perceived reality of reality TV viewing, and block two was significant (Step 2: F (2, 403) = 3.25, $p < .05$). However, block 3 failed to produce a significant result at the 95% criterion level (Step 3: F (3, 403) = 2.29, $p > .05$). When examining the interaction term, it was not found to be a significant predictor in the model.

Next, agape was entered as a criterion variable. However, the equation did not produce a significant equation. Each model explained less than 1% of the variance. None of the three blocks produced a significant result (Step 1: F (1, 401) = .29, $p > .10$; Step 2: F (2, 401) = .73, $p > .10$; Step 3: F (3, 401) = .52, $p > .10$). See Table 11. Perceived reality was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and agape.

Reality TV viewing was found to moderate the relationship between pragma and reality TV viewing. The first block explained 2.7% of the variance, the second block explained 4.9% of the variance in pragma, and adding the interaction term actually explained more variance (7.7%). See Table 10. Reality TV viewing and perceived reality were significant predictors of pragma. Block two and three was significant (Step 2: F (2, 403) = 11.47, $p < .001$; Step 3: F (3, 403) = 12.15, $p < .001$). When examining the interaction term, it was found to be a significant predictor in the model.

The mania love style also produced a significant equation. The first block explained 2.0% of the variance, the second block explained 1.9% of the variance in

pragma, and adding the interaction term actually explained less variance (1.7%). See Table 10. Reality TV viewing was a significant predictor of mania. Block two and three was significant (Step 2: F (2, 402) = 4.85, $p < .01$; Step 3: F (3, 402) = 3.37, $p < .05$). When examining the interaction term, it was not found to be a significant predictor in the model.

Attachment styles were next entered as criterion variables. For the avoidant attachment style, all three blocks explained less than 1% of the variance. None of the three blocks produced a significant result (Step 1: F (1, 399) = .17, $p > .10$; Step 2: F (2, 398) = 2.51, $p < .10$; Step 3: F (3, 397)=1.73, $p > .10$). See Table 11. The only variable that was a significant predictor was in block two. Perceived reality of reality TV was found to be a significant predictor of the avoidant attachment style, when controlling for reality TV exposure.

The anxious attachment style also failed to produce a significant result. Each model explained less than 1% of the variance. None of the three blocks produced a significant result (Step 1: F (1, 399) = .16, $p > .10$; Step 2: F (2, 398) = .10, $p > .10$; Step 3: F (3, 397) = .08, $p > .10$). See Table 11. Perceived reality was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and attachment styles.

The secure attachment style did not produce a significant equation. Each model explained less than 1% of the variance. None of the three blocks produced a significant result (Step 1: F (1, 399) = 2.01, $p > .05$; Step 2: F (2, 399) = 1.35, $p > .05$; Step 3: F (3, 399) = .914, $p > .05$). See Table 11. Perceived reality was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and secure.

Machiavellianism was found to explain less than 1% of the variance in the first two blocks, but the variance explained increased when the interaction term was added. The first two blocks were not significant (Step 1: F (1, 393) = 1.27, p > .10; Step 2: F (2, 392) = 2.05, p > .10) and the interaction term was significant at the 90% level, but did not meet the 95% confidence level deemed appropriate for this analysis (Step 3: F (3, 391) = 2.25, p < .10). See Table 11. When further examining the interaction term in the third block, it was not found to be a significant predictor of machiavellianism. Therefore, perceived reality did not appear to be a moderating variable.

In sum, to test the possibility of perceived reality moderating the relationship between reality TV viewing and love styles, attachment style, and machiavellianism an interaction term between reality TV viewing and perceived was examined. Perceived reality was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and love styles, attachment styles, and machiavellianism, except for in the pragma love style.

Research Question 3: Does exposure to relationship- related reality shows predict perceptions of love style and/or attachment style?

To answer research question three, the bivariate correlations between relationship-related reality show genres, love styles, and attachment styles were first examined. See Table 5. Four love styles were positively correlated with domestic-oriented shows (ludas, r = .10; storge, r = .11; pragma, r =.24 ; and mania, r = .11), was negative related to the agape love style (r = -.13),but were not related to attachment styles. See Table 5. Half-hour network dating shows were correlated with ludas love style (r = .18) and mania love style (r = .10), but not with storge, eros, pragma, or agape love styles. Viewing traditional sex-role shows was negatively correlated with attachment styles (avoidant, r =

-.10; anxious, r = -.10) and agape love style (r =-.12), positively correlated with storge (r = .10) and pragma (r = .15), and not related to secure, ludas, eros, or mania. Documentary shows depicting everyday life were not correlated with any of the attachment styles or eros. Pragma (r = .24) and mania (r = .11) were positively correlated, and agape (r = -.13) was negatively correlated.

Hierarchical regression models were conducted to further examine these relations. In all of the following models, the control variables were entered in block one, and the measures of relationship-related genres of reality TV (documentary of everyday life shows, traditional sex role shows, half-hour network dating shows, and domestic-oriented shows) were entered in the second block.

First, the ludas love style was entered as a criterion variable. The first block explained 1.8% of the variance, and adding the relationship-related genre variables explained more variance (7.1%). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (405,8) = 2.89, $p < .05$). Both blocks were significant (Step 1: F (4,418) = 2.91, $p < .05$; Step 2: F (8,418) = 4.99, $p < .001$). See Table 12. In the first block, sex was the only control variable found to be significant. Males are more likely to have a ludas love style. Viewing traditional sex-role shows was negatively related to ludas, and viewing half-hour network dating shows was positively related to it.

Storge was next examined as the criterion variable. Block one explained 1.6 % of the variance in storge, and block two explained 2.4% of the variance. The second block contributed slightly more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .01$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (406,8) =

.42, $p > .05$). Both blocks were significant (Step 1: F (4,419) = 2.74, $p < .05$; Step 2: F (8,419) = 2.29, $p < .05$). See Table 12. In both blocks, the only variables that were significant predictors of storge were age and race. Both variables were negative predictors, indicating an inverse relationship between age and storge, and being non-white positively predicts storge. None of the sub-genres of reality TV were found to predict storge.

Next, eros was examined as the criterion variable. Both blocks explained less than 1% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .00$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (407,8) = -.05, $p >$ .05). Neither block was significant (Step 1: F (4,420) = .72, $p >$.05; Step 2: F (8,420) = .81, $p > .05$). None of the sub-genres of reality TV were found to relate tot eros.

Then, pragma was examined as the criterion variable. Block one explained 1.7% of the variance and block two explained 4.6% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .29$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (407,8) = 1.55, $p > .05$). Both blocks were significant (Step 1: F (4,420) = 2.82, $p <$.05; Step 2: F (8,420) = 3.51, $p < .01$). Documentary of everyday life shows were found to positively relate to the pragma love style.

Also, mania was examined as the criterion variable. Block one explained less than 1.0% of the variance and block two explained 2.4% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .03$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (406,8) = 1.51, $p > .05$). The first block was not significant, but the second block was significant (Step 1: F (4,419) = .49, $p >$.05; Step 2: F (8,419) = 2.30, $p < .05$). Documentary of everyday life shows were found to positively relate to the

mania love style, and traditional dating shows were found to negatively relate to the mania love style.

The last love style, agape was examined as the criterion variable. Block one explained 1.1% of the variance and block two explained 1.2% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .01$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (405,8) = .06, $p > .05$). Both blocks were significant (Step 1: F (4,418) = 13.30, $p < .001$; Step 2: F (8,418) = 7.77, $p < .001$). Being a white, male was positively related to the agape love style. Documentary of everyday life shows were found to positively relate to the agape love style.

Next, attachment styles were examined in relation to relationship-related reality TV shows. First, avoidant attachment style was entered as a criterion variable. Block one explained zero variance, and block two only explained 1.6% of the variance in avoidant. The second block contributed more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .02$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (404,8) = .82, $p > .05$). Neither model was found to be significant (Step 1: F (4,417) = 1.02, $p > .05$; Step 2: F (8,417) = 1.84, $p > .05$). See Table 12. None of the control variables were found to predict storge. The only variable that predicted storge was exposure to traditional sex-role shows. Exposure to these types of shows predicts a decrease in avoidant attachment style.

Next, the anxious attachment style was entered as the criterion variable. Block one explained 2.2% of the variance, and block two explained close to the same amount of variance at 2.3% ($\Delta R^2 = .00$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (404,8) = .05, $p > .05$). Both

blocks were significant (Step 1: F (4,417) = 3.39, $p < .05$; Step 2: F (8,417) = 2.24, $p < .05$). See Table 13. In the first block, both sex and feminist status were significant predictors of an anxious style. Being feminist or male increase the anxious attachment style. In block two, after the addition of the sub-genres, only feminist status was a predictor of the anxious style. None of the relationship-related reality TV genres were significant predictors in this model.

Secure was next examined as the criterion variable. Block one explained 1.0 % of the variance in storge, and block two explained 1.3% of the variance. The second block did not contribute more variance ($\Delta R^2 = .00$). Relationship-related genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (407,8) = .36, $p > .05$). Both blocks were not significant (Step 1: F (4,416) = 1.66, $p > .05$; Step 2: F (8,416) = 1.67, $p > .05$). See Table 13. None of the sub-genres of reality TV were found to predict the secure attachment style.

In sum, when examining the relationship-related shows relations with love styles and attachment styles, love styles were the only variables that were related to relationship-related shows. Viewing traditional-role shows was negatively related to ludas. Ludas was positively related to viewing half-hour network dating shows. Documentary of everyday life shows were positively related to pragma and mania. Traditional dating shows were negatively related to mania, and domestic shows were positively related to agape. Storge love style, eros love style, avoidant attachment style, secure attachment style, and anxious attachment style were not related to viewing relationship-related shows.

Research Question 4: Does exposure to competition-based reality shows predict machiavellianism?

The correlations between competition-based reality show genres and machiavellianism were examined. Competition-based reality shows were measured by four variables: male-oriented shows, documentary of everyday life shows, Survivor, and Apprentice. Male-oriented shows were positively related to machiavellianism ($r = .16$). See Table 4. The other competition-based reality show genres were not correlated with machiavellianism.

Next, a hierarchical regression was conducted to further examine these relations. In the first block, the control variables were entered. In the second block, male-oriented shows, documentary of everyday life, Survivor, and Apprentice were entered. The first step explained 8.6% of the variance in machiavellianism, and the second step explained slightly more variance (9.8%), ($\Delta R^2 = .01$). Competition-based genres of reality TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model (F (405,8) = .67, $p >$ .05). Both of the blocks were significant (Step 1: F (4,418) = 10.82, $p < .001$; Step 2: F (8,418) = 6.66, $p < .001$). See Table 14. In the first block, age and sex were significant predictors of machiavellianism. Males and younger people tend to exhibit more machiavellianism. In the second block, sex remained significant, but age was not. Exposure to documentaries that reflect everyday life was positively related to machiavellianism.

In sum, although bivariate correlations showed that male-oriented shows were related to machiavellianism, hierarchical regression results did not find a relationship between these variables. Although the addition of competition-based genres of reality

TV, as a group, did not contribute significantly to the variance of the model, exposure to documentaries that reflect everyday life was positively related to machiavellianism.

Research Question 5: What motives predict reality-TV viewing, and how does reality television viewing predict love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism? In other words, does reality television exposure mediate the relationship between motives and love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism?

To test if reality TV mediated the relationship between motives and the outcome variables, a series of hierarchical regressions were conducted. Four guidelines were examined to determine mediation: the predictor to the mediator, mediator to the criterion, predictor to criterion, and the relationship between the predictor and the criterion to be reduced to non-significant when the mediator is controlled (Judd & Kenny, 1981). In order to demonstrate full mediation, all four criteria would have to be satisfied. To demonstrate partial mediation, the first three criteria would have to be satisfied. Each motive variable was tested separately on each outcome variable, creating 20 models. To see path models of the equations refer to Figures 4-6.

Only six appeared to satisfy the conditions for partial mediation. The first model included reality TV viewing mediating the relationship between interpersonal outcomes and machiavellianism. However, full-mediation was not found because the relationship between interpersonal outcomes and machiavellianism was not reduced to non-significance when the controlled for reality TV viewing ($t = 4.91$, $p < .001$). To further examine this relationship, Holbert and Stevenson (2003) call for the importance of testing indirect effects. To test these effects, a z-score was created by dividing the unstandardized coefficients by the standard error and comparing the product of the two

paths (MacKinnan, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets 2002). The combined effect of motives and reality TV viewing was significant (z-score product = 12.53, $p < .001$, standardized specific indirect effect = -.05). Therefore, interpersonal motives negatively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn positively contribute to machiavellianism.

Another model also satisfied the conditions for partial mediation. The model included reality TV viewing mediating the relationship between positive outcomes and the avoidant attachment style. Full-mediation was not found because the relationship between positive outcomes and the avoidant attachment style was not reduced to non-significance when the controlled for reality TV viewing ($t = -3.92$, $p < .001$). The combined effect of motives and reality TV viewing was significant (z-score product = -2.40, $p < .05$, standardized specific indirect effect = -.07). Positive outcome motives positively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn, negatively contributes to the avoidant attachment style.

The third model also met the criteria for partial mediation, but did not meet the criteria for full mediation. The model that included reality TV viewing mediating the relationship between interpersonal outcomes and the avoidant attachment style was not reduced to non-significant when the controlled for reality TV viewing ($t = 4.23$, $p < .001$). The combined effect of motives and reality TV viewing was significant (z-score product = 2.53, $p < .05$, standardized specific indirect effect = .01). Therefore, interpersonal outcome motives negatively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn negatively contributes to the avoidant attachment style.

The next model also met the criteria for partial mediation, but did not meet the criteria for full mediation. The model that included reality TV viewing mediating the

relationship between interpersonal outcomes and the secure attachment style was not reduced to non-significant when the controlled for reality TV viewing (t = -3.87, p < .001). The combined effect of motives and reality TV viewing was significant (z-score product = 1.70, p < .05, standardized specific indirect effect = -.02). Therefore, interpersonal outcome motives negatively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn negatively contributes to the secure attachment style.

Another model also satisfied the conditions for partial mediation. The model included reality TV viewing mediating the relationship between positive outcomes and the pragma love style. Full-mediation was not found because the relationship between positive outcomes and the avoidant attachment style was not reduced to non-significance when the controlled for reality TV viewing (t = 2.06, p < .05). The combined effect of motives and reality TV viewing was significant (z-score product = -2.07, p < .05, standardized specific indirect effect = .12). Positive outcome motives positively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn, negatively contributes to the pragma love style.

The last model also met the criteria for partial mediation, but did not meet the criteria for full mediation. The model that included reality TV viewing mediating the relationship between interpersonal outcomes and the pragma love style was not reduced to non-significant when the controlled for reality TV viewing (t = 3.40, p < .01). The combined effect of motives and reality TV viewing was significant (z-score product = 3.40, p < .05, standardized specific indirect effect = -.02). Therefore, interpersonal outcome motives negatively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn negatively contributes to the pragma love style.

In sum, reality TV viewing does partially mediate the relationship between motives and interpersonal perceptions in six instances. The relationship between the predictor and the criterion was not reduced to non-significance when the mediator was controlled; therefore none of the models exhibited evidence of full mediation. Interpersonal motives negatively contributed to reality TV viewing, which in turn positively contributed to machiavellianism. Positive outcome motives positively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn, negatively contributes to the avoidant attachment style. Interpersonal outcome motives negatively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn negatively contributes to the avoidant attachment style. Interpersonal outcome motives negatively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn positively contributes to the secure attachment style. Positive outcome motives positively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn, positively contributes to the pragma love style. Interpersonal outcome motives negatively contribute to reality TV viewing, which in turn positively contributes to the pragma love style.

Research Question 6: Does interpersonal attraction to reality TV characters moderate the relationship between reality television exposure and love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism?

Several hierarchical regression equations were conducted to determine if interpersonal attraction moderates reality TV and love styles, attachment styles, and machiavellianism. In all of the models, reality TV viewing was entered in the first block. The second block included the measure of interpersonal attraction, and the third block included the interaction between interpersonal attraction and reality TV viewing.

The first criterion variable was ludas love style. All three blocks were significant (Step 1: F (1, 402) = 6.41; p < .05; Step 2: F (2, 401) = 3.44; p <. 05; Step 3: F (3, 403) = 3.57; p <. 05). See Table 15. Block three explained slightly more variance than the first block (Block 1: r = .01; Block 3: r = .02). The measure of reality TV viewing remained significant in all three blocks, with interpersonal attraction becoming significant in the third block. The interaction term was not significant at the 95% criterion level, but was found to be significant at the 90% confidence level, which indicates marginal significance. However the probability of error is too high at this level, and the model does not meet the confidence interval deemed appropriate for this analysis. Therefore, interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and ludas love style.

Next, storge was entered as a criterion variable. The explained variance actually decreased from the first block to the third (Block 1: r = .01; Block 3: r = .00). None of the three blocks were significant. (Step 1: F (1, 403) = 3.489; p > .05; Step 2: F (2, 402) = 1.74; p >. 05; Step 3: F (3, 404) = 1.40; p >. 05). See Table 15. Interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and storge love style.

Then, mania was entered as a criterion variable. The explained variance actually decreased from the first block to the third (Block 1: r = .02; Block 3: r = .01). All three blocks were significant. (Step 1: F (1, 404) = 8.96; p < .01; Step 2: F (2, 404) = 4.48; p <. 05; Step 3: F (3, 404) = 3.02; p <. 05). See Table 15. None of the predictor variables were significant, including the interaction term. Interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and mania love style.

Next, agape was entered as a criterion variable. The explained variance actually decreased from the first block to the third (Block 1: r = -.02; Block 3: r = -.04). None of the three blocks were significant. (Step 1: F (1, 403) = .35; p >.05; Step 2: F (2, 403) = .21; p >. 05; Step 3: F (3, 403) = .42; p >. 05). See Table 16. None of the predictor variables were significant, including the interaction term. Interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and agape love style.

Then, eros was entered as a criterion variable. The explained variance actually remained the same from the first block to the third (Block 1: r = .01; Block 3: r = .01). Only the first block was significant. (Step 1: F (1, 405) = 4.76; p < .05; Step 2: F (2, 405) = 2.39; p >. 05; Step 3: F (3, 405) = 1.60; p >. 05). See Table 15. Reality TV viewing was a positive, significant predictor in the first two steps. The interaction term was not significant indicating that interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and agape love style.

The final love style, pragma was entered as a criterion variable. The explained variance actually remained the same from the first block to the third (Block 1: r = .03; Block 3: r = .03). All three blocks were significant. (Step 1: F (1, 405) = 12.64; p < .001; Step 2: F (2, 405) = 6.64; p <. 01; Step 3: F (3, 405) = 4.98; p <. 01). See Table 15. Reality TV viewing was a positive, significant predictor in the first two steps. The interaction term was not significant indicating that interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and pragma love style

Next attachment styles were examined. Avoidant attachment style did not appear to be moderated by interpersonal attraction. The second block explained the most significance (Block 1: r = -.00; Block 2: r = .01; Block 3: r = .01), and was the only one

to produce a significant result (Step 1: F (1, 402) = .08; p > .05; Step 2: F (2, 400) = 3.34, p <. 05; Step 3: F (3, 402) = 2.26; p >. 05). See Table 16. Examining the regression results, interpersonal attraction in the second block, was the only variable to produce a significant result. Interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and the avoidant attachment style.

The anxious attachment style also did not appear to be moderated by interpersonal attraction. None of the blocks were significant, and none of the variables in the model were significant. (Step 1: F (1, 401) = .12; p > .05; Step 2: F (2, 400) = .12; p >. 05; Step 3: F (3, 399) = .33; p >. 05). See Table 16. Interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and the anxious attachment style.

The secure attachment style also did not appear to be moderated by interpersonal attraction. None of the three blocks were significant (Step 1: F (1, 401) = 1.69; p > .05; Step 2: F (2, 401) = 2.52 p >. 05; Step 3: F (3, 401) = 1.82; p >.05). See Table 16. The interaction term was not significant indicating that interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and the secure attachment style.

Finally, machiavellianism was entered as a criterion variable. Machiavellianism did not appear to be moderated by interpersonal attraction, as none of the blocks produced a significant result (Step 1: F (1, 395) = 1.44; p > .05; Step 2: F (2, 394) = .72; p >. 05; Step 3: F (3, 393) = 1.51; p >. 05). See Table 16. In all of the blocks only one variable was significant. In the third block, reality TV viewing became significant, however the interaction term did not produce significance, indicating interpersonal attraction did not moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and machiavellianism.

In sum, the hierarchical regression results indicated that interpersonal attraction did not moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and love styles, attachment styles, or machiavellianism. There was a marginally significant result of interpersonal attraction moderating the relationship between reality TV viewing and ludas love style. The interaction term was significant at the 90% level, but that was not deemed acceptable for this investigation.

Results provided support for some of the research questions and others produced non-significant findings. In response to research question one, positive outcomes were found to positively relate to reality TV viewing, while interpersonal outcomes were found to negatively relate to reality TV viewing. Interpersonal motives positively related to machiavellianism, while relaxation outcomes were found to negatively relate to machiavellianism. Interpersonal motives were also positively related to the anxious attachment style and the avoidant attachment style. Passing the time was also positively related to the avoidant attachment style, but positive outcomes were negatively related to the avoidant attachment style. Interpersonal motives were positively related to agape, but negatively related to the secure attachment style. Interpersonal motives and positive motives positively related to pragma, but pragma negatively related to relaxation motives. Both interpersonal motives and passing the time motives were positively related to mania. Reality TV viewing was positively related to ludas and machiavellianism, but negatively related to the avoidant attachment style.

Research question two provided evidence of perceived reality moderating the relationship between reality TV viewing and love styles, attachment styles, or machiavellianism in only one instance, pragma. Research question three found ludas to

be negatively related to viewing traditional sex-role shows and positively related to half-hour network dating shows. Documentary of everyday life was positively related to both pragma and mania. Traditional sex-role shows negatively related to mania, while domestic shows positively related to agape. In response to research question four, competition-based shows, as a group, were not found to relate to machiavellianism. But documentary of everyday life shows positively related to machiavellianism. Research question five provided evidence of partial mediation. Reality TV was found to partially mediate the relationship between interpersonal outcomes and machiavellianism, secure, avoidant, and pragma; positive outcomes and the avoidant attachment style and pragma; In response to research question six, interpersonal attraction was not found to moderate the relationship between reality TV exposure and love styles, attachment styles, and machiavellianism.

CHAPTER 4: QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Quantitative research is useful in examining relationships, but it does not aid in our understanding of why these relationships are occurring. Therefore, three sets of focus group interviews were conducted to provide a deeper understanding of the quantitative findings. The focus group questions were oriented toward better understanding the process of the reality TV experience. The objective that drove the qualitative research was two-fold: to understand the relationship between the viewers and their motives for viewing reality TV; and the outcomes that reality TV viewers took away from the experience. The goal of the focus groups is to aid in our understanding of the complex relationship between reality TV and the viewer. Interviews lasted thirty to forty minutes and produced fifty-two pages of transcripts. Interpretation of the focus group interviews produced two major themes relating to the motives for watching reality TV and interpretation of the content.

Motives for watching reality TV

A thematic analysis concluded that respondents' motives for watching reality TV were dichotomized in two distinct categories. They watch the shows they find interesting; the shows that align with their hobbies and interests, and have characters to whom they can relate. However, they also talk about the shows they watch that have nothing to do with their own lives. These shows have outrageous premises, no similar values to the respondents, and characters they would never relate to in their everyday lives. There really did not seem to be any middle ground. Respondents did not report watching shows that they somewhat agreed with, or shows that had aspects of both. A

clear dichotomy emerged with the respondents indicating watching reality TV shows because they were either similar to, or outrageously different from, their own lives.

Many times the participants would discuss the reality shows that they watched and the dichotomy was clear in their response.

> Jeff [1]: (I like watching) *Real World* because I can relate to those people in my age bracket. Seeing people adapt to change especially, *Hogan Knows Best* seeing how they interact. What extremely wealthy people do with their money. Spending money regardless and seeing how they adapt to their life style.

In this quote, Jeff discusses two of his favorite reality TV programs to watch. He reports being attracted to them for very different reasons. He likes to watch the *Real World* because the characters are similar in age and are going through similar experiences. However, his other favorite show, *Hogan Knows Best*, is very different from his current lifestyle, showing the lifestyle of the rich and famous. This is a good example of the dichotomy of similarity/dissimilarity.

The similarity/dissimilarity dichotomy rarely occurred within the same conversational turn. Most of the time, it was two separate turns within a conversation that revealed this dichotomy.

> Julie: *Flavor of Love* is not that great, but I watch, and I really don't know why. Those people are freaks…I like that show too (*Amazing Race*). I like to travel and stuff so it's cool to see all the places they go, lots of cool places.

First, the respondents were discussing *Flavor of Love*, then several minutes later the conversation turned to *Amazing Race*. Julie watches *Flavor of Love* because the contestants on the show were dissimilar to her, but she liked *Amazing Race* because the

contestants had hobbies similar to her. While this dichotomy emerged, not all of the respondents discussed viewing for both reasons. Some respondents only reported watching reality TV shows that were similar to themselves, while others only reported watching those that were dissimilar.

Self-similarity. Many respondents discussed enjoying reality shows that portrayed similar hobbies to the ones they enjoyed. In the interview, two of the respondents discussed a new show they watched.

> Megan: *Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders* that's like a new one we started watching. It follows these girls who are in training camp to be like a cheerleader and stuff. We used to be cheerleaders. So we get all excited.
>
> Lindsay: A lot of the stuff they have to do, we used to have to do and it sucked, so it's kinda fun watching them going through that.

These two participants discussed how they enjoyed the *Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders* show because it portrayed an experience that was similar to their own lives. They are attracted to the show because the participants are similar to themselves, both valuing the role of the cheerleader. Even though the respondents currently were not cheerleaders, their past hobby influenced their decision to watch this show.

The same show can have a different perception based on the current and past hobbies of the individual.

> Sara: I like *American Idol* because I play the piano and have for 11 years so I really like music. I like to watch the different people grow and get better performances and stuff.

Even though she did not specifically discuss a past in singing, her playing of the piano transferred to a general interest for music. However, another respondent reported watching the first few episodes of the same show just to make fun of people, he did not report a background in music. Pete reported watching the beginning episodes because the contestants were just like himself, they could not sing at all. The only difference between the contestants and himself is that they decided to be on the show, and he did not.

> Pete: *American Idol* is good. The episodes at the beginning are best. We make fun of the people. It's like, don't they have any friends? I would tell my friends that they sucked before they went on TV and stuff.

Pete clearly enjoys the same show but for a very different reason. Sara has a musical past, and Pete does not, which leads to a very different perception of the same show. Sara watches to enjoy the talent, and Pete watches to enjoy the lack of talent.

Self-contradictory. Respondents also reported watching shows that they would not consider similar to themselves in any way. The motives for watching these types of shows were the outrageous aspect of the show's premise, or an unbelievable character. These shows and characters were viewed as completely in opposition to the values expressed by the respondents.

> Sally (discussing *Flavor of Love*): I think it is absurd. There are actually people out there like that. That's what gets me. It's a little man and they are fighting over him. It's ridiculous.

Sally wants to watch other people and how they act because their behavior is so different from any behavior that she sees in her everyday life. It is the outrageous premise and characters that attract Sally to the show.

Some reality TV shows are competition-based shows and do not feature recurring characters. The respondents are not attracted to the outrageous characters in these shows, but they are attracted to the outrageous premise of the show.

> Todd: I like *Next* and *Parental Control* because the concept is so ridiculous. It is funny watching people turn each other down. I guess people are really cruel to each other, and it's really entertaining.

Todd is attracted to the outrageous premise of the show. These shows are on MTV and both feature a contestant dating multiple individuals and selecting one of the daters at the end of the show. He enjoys the program because it shows him situations that he does not deal with in his everyday life.

When respondents discussed their motives for watching reality TV programming, they fell into two distinct dichotomies. Self-similarity was the first category that emerged. Viewers of reality TV enjoy watching those shows that coincide with themselves. This could include: hobbies, age, race, gender, or lifestyle. The second emergent category was self-contradictory. Self-contradictory motives include watching because there are people or situations that are not similar to one's own life. These situations and people are considered absurd and outrageous.

Effects of viewing reality TV

When discussing outcomes gained from watching reality shows none of the respondents mentioned any direct outcomes they thought they experienced. The only outcomes that emerged from the analysis were indirect outcomes. The outcomes can be categorized in two distinct categories. First, "reality TV as a speculum," allows the viewer to measure their own behavior based on what they see on reality TV shows.

Second, "reality TV as a kaleidoscope," provides a distorted, negative perception of interpersonal relationships. These are the two effects that respondents talked about.

Reality TV as a speculum

The first sub-theme that emerged was "reality TV as a speculum," which includes gratifications that emerged that helped the individual to construct, or reconstruct a respondent's sense of self. In accordance with Cooley's "looking glass self," (1964) respondents discussed each of the three steps of the theory. First, they reported how they used the situations that they saw on reality television as a template for imagining their behavior. Second, they imagined how others would react to them, and then they based their perceptions on this imagined interaction. In every single focus group, at least one person "imagined" himself or herself in a reality TV show, or a situation that arose on a reality TV program.

> Don: I like game shows like *Deal or No Deal*, *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire* where you get cash prizes. Even though there is not much skill in *Deal or No Deal* you can play along especially like quiz shows and answer questions and think I can do better than that. I should have won the million dollars. Then everybody would think I was smart. It would be fun.

Don uses these reality TV game shows as a template for imagining his own behavior. First, he imagines himself going on the show, and winning the big prize. Second, he proceeds to tell how others would perceive him afterwards, indicating his friends would recognize his intelligence. Finally, he develops a feeling about himself based on the imagined interaction; he thinks it would be fun to feel smart.

While Don envisions the positive reaction to his imagined success on the show, not all of the imagined perceptions were positive. Some of the respondents indicated a negative opinion after their imagined perception of appearing on the show.

> Jane (discussing *Survivor*): You see them backstabbing and the really mean things people do. It gives you less trust of people. They cheated on people so you think that all people might be that way if that's reality. If I was on the show I'd be totally messed up afterward, need therapy or something. People would think I was crazy. I would definitely need major help though.

Jane also utilizes the looking-glass-self but instead of her imagined success, she imagines a very negative future if she participated in the show. First she imagines how she presents herself. Since she views the show as very strategic and competitive, she does not think that she is manipulative enough to participate in the show, thus indicating her imagined failure. Then she proceeds to imagine other people's reaction to her on the show, that they would think that she was crazy. Third, she develops feelings about herself based on this imagined interaction. She indicated that she would need therapy, people would think that she was crazy, and that she probably would become crazy.

The first two examples dealt with an imagined appearance on the show. It didn't specifically refer to a season or episode. Another example of the looking-glass-self can be seen when one imagines if they were one of the characters on the show, and how they would relate to the other characters.

> Susan: *Hogan Knows Best* gets on my nerves because he's so sexist with his daughter. He is so protective but she's older. He let's his son do anything. 'He's my boy.' The older girl can't do anything. She's so nice, and the kid does

everything wrong. It makes me mad because I want her to fight back. I want her to do bad stuff. If I were her, I'd stand up to him. I wouldn't let that happen to me. People would probably think that I was a bitch though. I wouldn't care.

Susan first imagines, if she were the daughter on *Hogan Knows Best*, how she would react differently to her father. She then imagines how other people would react to her behavior indicating that everyone would think that she was a bitch if she stood up for herself. Thirdly, she develops feelings about herself, that she would be acting like a 'bitch,' but that she would not care. In this example, a specific character encouraged the looking-glass-self, instead of merely just a show. These examples are clearly portraying how reality television shows and characters provide situations that viewers can put themselves in, imagine the response of someone else, and develop some conclusion based on that imagined judgment. Therefore, self-gratifications occur as the viewer uses reality television programs as a "looking glass self," (Cooley, 1964).

Reality TV as a kaleidoscope

When the respondents discussed reality TV, they often compared the genre of television to other types of television. One issue that was brought up in all of the focus group interviews was the heavy editing that is done in reality TV shows. This obvious, expected editing decreases the credibility of how "real" reality television is to its viewers.

Julie: They edit everything too. They'll show different jumps. I was like wait wasn't he wearing that shirt in yesterday's show.

Respondents agreed that the editing is what makes reality TV less "real" even though it is unscripted. While the editing was obvious to all respondents, they agreed that this

distorted lens that reality TV provides makes them question the interpersonal relationships that they view when watching reality TV shows.

A common theme in the focus groups was the distorted lens that reality TV provides about relationships. The relationships that are portrayed on reality TV are not seen as normal, but seen as extreme. Respondents named a few shows, such as *Extreme Home Makeover* and *Wedding Story*, that did not portray the negative side of interpersonal relationships; but respondents agreed that the majority of reality TV programming did not promote a positive image of interpersonal relationships.

> Monica: I think a lot of reality shows portray like more of the worst side of people. You see them doing the backstabbing.
>
> Julie: Yeah like all of the negative characteristics of their personality. People act immoral, disrespectful. You can't trust anyone. Bad qualities.

Monica and Julie both agree that reality TV does not portray interpersonal relationships in a positive manner. Julie even goes on to describe this negative portrayal leading to less trust in people. Even though respondents described reality TV as surreal, they described the effects as very real.

Less trust of people in general was a theme that pervaded every focus group session. Many respondents thought that this was one of the worst effects experienced from reality TV.

> Paul: You see them backstabbing and the really mean things that people do. It gives you less trust of people. They cheated on people so you think that all people might be that way if it's supposed to be 'reality.'

These effects are almost expected from shows like *Cheaters, Survivor*, or the *Amazing Race*; where the entire premise of the show is based on lying and deception of other people. Unexpectedly, respondents also thought that interpersonal relationships were portrayed negatively when it was not part of the premise of the show.

> Sally: *American Idol* is great, but is also conflicting. The people are out there, just putting themselves out there, and the judges get way critical, just mean sometimes.

While *American Idol* is not a show that I would expect to portray relationships in a negative light, viewers are finding these negative portrayals in shows with a positive theme.

Respondents all agree that the portrayal of interpersonal relationships on reality TV shows is distorted, which is why I have called this theme, "reality TV as a kaleidoscope." Individuals realize that the view they receive is distorted, but they continue to watch reality TV.

> Don: Several shows are using the sense of family: *Hogan Knows Best, Osbornes*; look at what is portraying the American society values. People are taking it like every family is like this. It is distorted. They get you sucked in and then you just have to know what's gonna happen next week.

Don agrees that reality TV does not depict relationships accurately, but admits that he continues to watch. The premises and twists involved with some of these reality shows is enough to keep people tuned in, even though respondents all agreed that reality TV is not a clear picture of reality.

Reality TV viewers discussed the effects of viewing reality TV in two distinct categories. First, reality TV acts as a speculum because individuals use reality TV as a yardstick to measure their own behavior. Thus, reality TV is a chance for self-reflection. Second, reality TV acts as a kaleidoscope. This is because it gives the viewer messages about interpersonal relationships, but the messages it portrays are always distorted and show the negative side of interpersonal relationships.

Two major themes emerged relating to the motives for watching reality TV and interpretation of reality TV content. The first theme is labeled "motives for watching reality TV." Dichotomous perceptions of reality TV can be classified into two main sub-themes. The first sub-theme is "self-similarity," and the second sub-theme is labeled "self-contradictory." A clear dichotomy emerged between the two sub-categories. Respondents discussed both reality shows and their characters using this dichotomy of bi-polar opposites.

The second major theme is labeled "effects of reality TV viewing." The first sub-theme, "reality TV as a speculum," included the three step process of Cooley's "looking glass self" (1964), in which individuals imagined themselves in a situation similar to those characters in reality television shows, then imagined what others would think about them in that situation, and developed feelings based on that imagined encounter. The second sub-theme was "reality TV as a kaleidoscope." This theme included how the respondents discussed the ways that they used reality TV to view interpersonal relationships. Respondents agreed that reality TV did not portray interpersonal relationships in a positive manner, but instead reality TV was always showing the negative behaviors expressed by the characters. These emergent themes aid in our

understanding of an individual's motive for watching reality TV and the perceptions they take away from the viewing experience.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Reality TV is a relatively new genre of television programming. Prior to reality TV, the majority of television shows were scripted and portrayed actors in their roles. Individuals receive a different experience when they turn on their television to view a reality TV show rather than a traditional form of television programming. They have different expectations and perceptions (Cohen & Weimann, 2000). The purpose of this study was to understand how motivations drive the reality TV experience and how perceptions of interpersonal relationships are cultivated by reality TV programming. To understand the relationship between the reality TV programs and the reality TV viewer, both quantitative research and qualitative research were conducted. Participants completed a questionnaire, which allowed for analysis of the relationship between reality TV viewing and interpersonal relationship perceptions. After these relationships were analyzed, focus group interviews were conducted to further explain the relationship between reality TV viewing and interpersonal relationship perceptions. The qualitative and quantitative research coupled together aid in our understanding of the reality TV viewing experience.

It was beneficial to use both methods of research because of the dynamic relationship between reality TV and the viewers of these shows. Quantitative research was useful because it established several relationships between reality TV exposure, viewer motives, and viewer outcomes. However, all that quantitative research revealed was that this relationship existed; it could not describe the 'how' or 'why' it existed. Qualitative focus group interviews provided more knowledge as to the depth of these

relationships. In this chapter, examples from the focus groups are used to provide some further explanation of the quantitative findings. Therefore, the primary justification for this multi-method approach is complementarity (Greene et al., 1989). Having the qualitative questions informed by the initial quantitative findings allowed for a greater understanding of the depth of the relationship between reality TV and the viewer. This approach was extremely helpful in understanding the reality TV viewing experience.

Review of findings

Research question 1a examined what viewing motives predict individuals watching reality television programming. Positive outcomes significantly predicted reality TV viewing. Watching reality TV because it is entertaining, stimulating, enjoyable, exciting, or amusing was a significant predictor of watching reality TV.[2] Therefore, having a desire to watch for positive outcomes significantly predicted reality TV viewing. Interpersonal outcomes negatively predicted reality TV viewing. Watching to avoid being alone, or when there is no one else to talk with negatively predicts reality TV viewing. Both of these findings coincide with Nabi (2003) who found that regular viewers watched because they found it entertaining, for the enjoyment of watching another's life, and the self-awareness they receive from these programs. Casual viewers watched because they were bored, or because they enjoyed watching another's life (Nabi, 2003). Relaxation outcomes and passing the time outcomes were not found to be associated with reality TV viewing.

The reason I speculate that viewers who watch for positive outcomes are more likely to watch reality TV is because they are getting a positive reward from the reality show. They leave the experience feeling entertained, amused, cheered up, or stimulated

(Rubin, 1981). Since they receive a positive outcome from the experience they are more likely to participate for a longer time. One line of uses and gratifications research has linked the gratifications sought with those obtained from viewing media content. Palmgreen and Rayburn (1985) created an expectancy-value model, which hypothesizes that individuals expect certain rewards from the media. These rewards could be psychological. When individuals experience these rewards, the rewards themselves "provide guidance for subsequent choices," (McQuail, 2000, p. 390). Therefore, I speculate that if individuals are leaving the reality TV experience feeling happy, cheered up, or entertained, this may increase the likelihood that they will watch more reality TV. This coincides with Zillmann (1988) who found that viewing entertaining messages was related to changing ones' mood, and selection of certain show types regulated viewer's mood.

On the other hand, watching reality TV for interpersonal outcomes was negatively related to reality TV exposure. Individuals who watch for interpersonal outcomes want a quick connection to other humans (Nabi, 2003). It is like a quick fix for a need to socialize. Since interpersonal outcomes were a negative predictor of reality TV, watching reality TV shows to keep oneself company, negatively related to watching reality TV shows. Perhaps this genre of television programming does not gratify the need for interpersonal relationships. I speculate that viewers might be driven to watch other forms of TV programming for interpersonal motives because other genres of programming more easily allow for relationships to develop between viewers and TV characters, especially because viewers are not likely to worry about their favorite character being 'eliminated' from a primetime drama. Since primetime dramas portray

the same main characters every week, regular viewers are more likely to get to know the characters. In reality shows, such as *Survivor*, or *Biggest Loser*, the contestants vote one another off every week. It would seem like the audience might have a more difficult time getting to know the characters if they are uncertain they will be there in the next episode.

During focus group interviews, many interviewees reported having the TV turned on just to keep them company when they were home alone. Reality shows were shows that respondents would turn on because they are relatively easy to watch while doing other tasks. While watching in this manner, viewers are not really connecting with the characters because they are busy doing other tasks simultaneously. If an individual is not paying attention to the television content, I speculate that their motive for watching the reality show is probably not to keep themselves company. Perhaps when viewers need a show to keep them company, they actually sit down and watch the show instead of using it merely as background noise. Therefore, this could explain how interpersonal outcomes were negatively associated with reality TV exposure.

Research question 1b asks what viewing motives predict love style, attachment style, and/or machiavellianism. Interpersonal motives were found to positively predict machiavellianism and pragma, whereas relaxation motives were found to negatively predict both. Watching reality TV to keep oneself company, or to get away from others, is positively related to machiavellianism and pragma, or love driven by thoughts instead of feelings. Agape, or selfless motherly love was also related to interpersonal outcomes. Watching reality TV to relax, rest, or unwind negatively predicts machiavellianism and pragma. Positive outcomes and passing the time motives were not found to significantly predict machiavellianism. However, positive outcomes did positively relate to pragma.

Those who watched to take away a positive benefit from the show were also likely to believe that love is driven by one's head, rather than one's heart.

A possible explanation for the relationship between motives and machiavellianism might be the orientation, whether external or internal, of the motives for watching reality TV. Those who watch for interpersonal motives seem to be seeking some sort of external stimulation, or a reward from outside of themselves. This coincides with the research of Wastell and Booth (2003), who find machiavellianism to be related to externally oriented thinking. However, watching for reasons that will provide internal stimulation, such as relaxation outcomes, were negatively related to machiavellianism. Because machiavellian thinking is based on perceptions of other people, it focuses on externally oriented thinking. It does not relate to how someone feels about themselves, but about others. Therefore, it makes sense that it is negatively associated with a desire for self-satisfaction.

During focus group interviews, respondents indicated that sometimes they watch reality TV shows to escape their current lives and problems, and allow the show to take them to another world. Some respondents discussed this as the main benefit of reality TV shows. These views coincided with the research of Pearlin (1959) when they indicated that they use the TV to escape their current realities and find a "safe" place from their problems. Other interviewees indicated that they watched to unwind or clear their minds after a hard day at work or school. These participants did not report escaping anything external, but watching because they benefited personally. Therefore, it makes sense that machiavellianism is negatively related to watching to escape ones' current reality. They

are not concerned about others' behavior but only about their own satisfaction when they turn on reality TV shows.

Results for research question 1b also found that individuals who watched for interpersonal motives were likely to express an anxious attachment style but not likely to express a secure attachment style. Watching to avoid being alone was related to a reluctant and worrisome belief about one's partner, but not feeling secure about one's relationship. Positive outcomes, relaxation outcomes, and passing the time outcomes were not found to predict the anxious attachment style. I speculate that individuals who watch to avoid being alone are more likely to use the media to satisfy their needs for human interaction. Reality TV shows may function as an alternative to actual social interaction. When this occurs, individuals might be more likely to develop a parasocial relationship (Armstrong & Rubin, 1989). I speculate that these viewers might develop a sense of friendship with the reality TV characters to satisfy their needs. Individuals may be more affected by the cunning and manipulating they view on most reality TV shows if they view the characters as their friends. This may lead to a less trusting view of humankind. During focus group interviews respondents did not discuss their own style of interpersonal relating, so there is no qualitative data to support this finding.

Both interpersonal motives and passing the time motives positively predicted the avoidant attachment style and mania love style, whereas positive outcomes were a negative predictor of the avoidant attachment style. Relaxation outcomes were not found to predict the avoidant attachment style. Watching reality TV because one does not want to be alone, or because there is nothing else to do, was related to finding it difficult to trust others and being uncomfortable relating to others and also with an obsessive love

style. Watching reality TV to keep oneself company, or because one is bored, is also related to an avoidant attachment style. I speculate that individuals who watch to avoid trusting others might use the media to satisfy their needs for human interaction. The reality TV show could function as an alternative to actual social interaction. When this occurs, I speculate that individuals might develop a parasocial relationship (Armstrong & Rubin 1989). These viewers develop a sense of friendship with the reality TV characters to satisfy their needs. Because the respondents felt that these characters were their friends, they may be more affected by the manipulating they view on the screen.

Every focus group discussed this phenomenon. In all groups, there were several people who talked about the reality TV characters as if they were good friends. Some respondents reported actually going so far as to asking their favorite reality TV characters to be their friend on myspace.com and kept in touch by sending them comments and reading their blog. Other respondents reported using the phone to cast a vote, or several votes, so that their favorite contestant did not get eliminated on *American Idol*. Two respondents even discussed using the Internet to find out current information about past reality TV characters that they enjoyed watching. Therefore, the interviews indicated that some people are forming a connection with the characters they see on their favorite reality TV shows.

Also, using reality TV for positive outcomes was negatively associated with the avoidant attachment style. Watching because it was exciting, entertaining, and enjoyable was negatively related to feeling uncomfortable around others. During focus group interviews respondents reported that watching reality TV served many functions in their lives. Those who reported watching because it was entertaining also reported that reality

TV served social functions. They talked about these shows with their friends, family, and classmates.

Research question 1c examines the relationship between reality TV viewing and love styles, attachment styles, and machiavellianism. Reality TV viewing was found to be a positive predictor of the ludas love style. Watching reality TV was related to believing that love is played as a game, or sport. Overall TV viewing was not found to predict the ludas love style, so this was a phenomenon that was unique to reality TV.

A plausible explanation of this effect is the way that love is portrayed on reality TV (Stanley, 2006). In shows such as *The Bachelor, Average Joe*, or *Paradise Hotel* love is portrayed as a game. Contestants compete to beat out other contestants in order to find 'true love.' It makes sense that individuals who are exposed to these messages more, are more likely to have beliefs that coincide with the beliefs they view on these shows. Grabe and Drew (2007) compared media genres when assessing beliefs about crime. Significant variance was found across media genres in beliefs about crime after media exposure. Their research calls for more genre-specific effect research. Different genres portray social reality differently. Therefore, I speculate that heavy viewers of reality TV are more likely to hold beliefs about relationships that coincide with the beliefs that are portrayed on reality TV shows. Relationships are portrayed as more outlandish and liberal than those on more traditional genres of television programming (Stanley, 2006).

When focus group interviewees discussed how love was portrayed on reality shows, most respondents agreed that reality TV portrayed romantic relationships in an outlandish way. Respondents were willing to talk about how these relationships were portrayed, but did not discuss how this related to their own romantic relationships. This

topic might have been too personal for individuals to discuss in the focus group interviews. It also might have been that the connection to their own life may be too subtle for them to recognize. They are most likely consciously processing the outlandish behavior that they view. However, I speculate that individuals may be affected in their approach to relationships, such as love style and attachment style. The reality TV show provides them with a unique perspective of romantic relationships

Although reality TV viewing was not related to the storge love style, overall TV viewing was a negative predictor of it. Those who watched less TV were more likely to believe that love is something that develops over time based on friendship and similarity. Perhaps this inverse relationship indicates that people who watch less TV have more time for friendships. Because they are not sitting at home watching television, they might be using their time in a social manner, developing relationships with other individuals (Finn, 1997). This also makes sense because love is not portrayed in this manner on television (Stanley, 2006). Watching reality TV was negatively related to believing in friendship love. Reality shows do not portray love in this way. Even though a show may air over several weeks, individuals are aware that is was filmed in only a manner of days (Hall, 2006). Love is portrayed as a competition, usually between many individuals. Therefore, if viewers learn the beliefs about relationships that they view on these reality shows, then it makes sense that reality TV viewing is not associated with the storge love style. However, another possibility could be that individuals who believe in, and value, friendship love, are spending less time in front of the television, and more time out making friends and enjoying their time with others.

Next, the relationship between reality TV viewing and attachment styles was examined. The anxious attachment style was not related to reality TV viewing or overall TV viewing. In other words, worrying about rejection from others was not related to reality TV viewing. This was surprising, considering all of the eliminations, elections, and contests that portray rejection on reality shows. Perhaps this is because there is no chance of rejection when an individual chooses to watch a reality TV show. The television is always there and ready to keep the viewer company, unlike an interpersonal relationship where the person may or may not be available when the individual desires interaction. The reality show is always available and never rejects the viewer's company, so maybe it does not affect the viewer's perception of rejection in their own lives.

An avoidant attachment style was found to be negatively related to reality TV viewing but positively related to overall TV viewing. Watching a lot of reality TV was related to not avoiding trusting, or getting close to other people. However, watching a lot of TV overall, was related to avoiding depending on others. This difference could be due to the direction of the relationship. Perhaps individuals who avoid getting close to other people watch less reality TV, instead of the reality TV affecting their attachment style. Reality TV may be viewed as a means of getting close with others, and thus is avoided just as it would be in the individuals everyday interactions. Perhaps individuals that do not avoid getting close to other people are generally more attracted to reality TV. Due to their enjoyment of being around others, they are more attracted to reality television programming.

Individuals view what they see on reality TV as less realistic than traditional TV programming (Nabi, 2003). However, since individuals view overall TV exposure as

more realistic than reality TV, viewing overall TV content may lead to a less trusting view of relationships. This finding coincides with the mean world syndrome (Gerbner et al., 1980). Individuals who are exposed to the negative perceptions of relationships on television are more likely to have a less trusting view of others, and believe that people are selfish. Over time, long-term exposure to these TV messages influence the way that the world is perceived. The messages that individuals receive about relationships from reality TV shows are not an accurate portrayal of healthy, interpersonal relationships (Stanley, 2006). Therefore, by viewing these negative portrayals, over time they are internalized and used as a means for viewing their everyday interactions.

Reality TV was positively associated with machiavellianism. Watching reality TV was associated with reporting manipulative, deceptive, and cunning behavior in one's relationships with others. Overall TV viewing was not related to machiavellianism, so we can conclude that this effect is due to reality TV shows and not TV viewing in general. This coincides with the cultivation hypothesis of Gerbner (1973), but instead of exposure to overall TV viewing, this cultivation effect is genre-specific to reality TV. I expect that heavy viewers of reality TV are more likely to hold beliefs that coincide with those that are portrayed on these shows. This coincides with prior research on machiavellianism. For example, Tamborini, Stiff, and Zillman (1987) found that the machiavellian trait was a good predictor of preference for graphic horror films. Those who preferred horror films also were found to be machiavellian. Since the content of horror films involves actors in roles that are dishonest, ruthless, and cunning, it makes sense that the individuals who reported watching a lot of horror films also reported their machiavellian perspective. Since horror films and reality TV both portray relationships

as cunning, it is easy to understand how they both might positively predict machiavellianism.

Focus group respondents discussed that their interpretation of reality TV shows was that they usually portrayed the cunning and manipulating side of relationships. Most of them included manipulating in their very premise. The results of the content assessment of reality TV programming that I conducted (see chapter one) indicate that most reality shows involve competing with others (p.18). Therefore, the shows focus on the strategies used to manipulate others. This occurs in shows like *Survivor, Apprentice, Wife Swap*, and *Date My Mom*. Even in shows that do not involve competition as their premise, they do usually portray conflict to keep it interesting; for example, *Real World, Big Brother, Road Rules, Newlyweds,* and *The Simple Life*. Just like other genres of television shows, reality TV shows also have a plot, main characters, and conflict. It is through this conflict that the manipulative side of relationships is portrayed. Focus group respondents discussed how reality TV shows focused on conflict and usually the dark side of relationships was portrayed.

Research question 2 examined if perceived reality moderated the relationship between reality TV viewing and love styles, attachment styles, or machiavellianism. Perceived reality of reality TV was not found to change the impact of reality TV viewing on love styles, attachment styles, or machiavellianism, except in one relationship. Perceived reality was found to moderate the relationship between reality TV viewing and pragma. Pragma is love that is driven by thoughts, rather than feelings. Perhaps perceived reality moderates the relationship between this love style because it is a very conscious love style. Individuals are aware of their thoughts and let their thoughts drive

their actions, rather than merely feelings. This love style is very planned, contrived, and thought out. Questions on the survey that related to pragma included asking respondents how important their partner's relationship was to their family, career, and their partner's potential as a good parent. Respondents that were pragmatic agreed with these reasons for choosing their partner. Therefore, they may be very analytical individuals in their life, and their love style is just one area where they carefully analyze their course of action.

I expected that perceived reality would moderate more of the relationships between viewing and interpersonal relationship perceptions. The reason that I believe the relation between reality TV and relationship beliefs did not vary according to perceived reality is because the measure of perceived reality was inadequate. Potter's (1988) conceptual definition of perceived reality was composed of three dimensions. The first dimension is the magic window, which deals with how much the viewer believes that the mediated message reflects the outside world. Second, utility refers to the relevance and degree to which one can relate the information to their own life. Third, identity refers to the identification with a character on television. Magic window, utility, and identity are central to the understanding of a viewer's perception of perceived reality. My scale did not measure these three dimensions of perceived reality, but perceived reality as a whole. This could be why the results were insignificant. Judgments of perceived reality are complex and multidimensional (Hall, 2003). Measures that do not capture the dynamic nature of the concept may not capture the relationship.

These findings do not fit in with current research. Hall (2006) found that perceived reality did have an impact on viewers' perceptions of reality programs after

conducting focus group interviews. Hall (2003) also utilized focus group data. This open-ended method for gathering data is perhaps a better measure of the concept. I used a five-item scale, and I do not believe that it accurately measured perceived reality because its concise nature. Perceived reality should be studied on many dimensions, and there should be several questions relating to each of these dimensions. Meng and Lugalambi (2003) measured two dimensions of perceived reality, plausibility and utility. More research is needed to uncover the dimensions of perceived reality. My findings that the relation between reality TV and relationship beliefs did not vary according to perceived reality contradicts other recent research findings (Hall, 2003; Hall, 2006; Meng & Lugalambi, 2003), which is why I believe that the measure I used may not have been valid.

Many focus group interviewees discussed how reality TV characters often 'act' more than actors. Respondents discussed how contestants are coached on what to say, they are trying to act outlandish, or manipulative just to win the prize. Focus group participants appeared to express low levels of perceived reality of the characters' behavior. Another common theme among the focus group respondents was that characters portrayed on reality TV shows were probably different in their everyday lives. The characters on reality shows are aware that a camera is filming them, and they put forth the image that they want the audience to see. This relates to Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical theory. Goffman's theory suggests that individuals have many sides. When individuals are in front of others, they put forth an image that they want others to see them as, just as an actor on a stage. Backstage behavior occurs only when the individual is alone or with close companions. When an individual is backstage they can

relax, and act like themselves without the worry of being judged by others. Most reality TV shows frame the show as if they are portraying an individual's backstage behavior, when, in fact, they are only showing their front stage behavior. Respondents' reported being aware of this phenomenon, and it was for this reason that many reported a lack of trust of what they saw on reality TV shows. Respondents also blamed heavy editing for their lack of trust. While the characters are portraying themselves on the show, it is the producer who has the final say on the storyline and what will be included in the final cut (Poniewozik & McDowell, 2006). The term 'reality TV,' seems like an oxymoron; respondents do not see this type of programming as very realistic.

Research question 3 questioned how relationship-related reality shows (network half-hour dating shows, domestic-oriented shows, traditional sex-role shows, and shows that reflect everyday life) were related to love styles and attachment styles. Relationship-related shows were not related to attachment styles, eros, or storge. Ludas was related to viewing traditional sex-role shows and half-hour network dating shows. First, viewing traditional role shows was negatively related to ludas and mania love style. Watching TLC shows such as *Baby Story, Wedding Story*, or *Perfect Proposal* was negatively associated with believing that love is played as a game, or sport, and obsessive love. This makes sense because these shows are portraying love in an idealistic, fairytale manner (Stanley, 2006). These TLC shows do not focus on the hardships that occur in relationships, but the positive moments that couples experience. "Shows built on the prospect of happily-ever-after have become huge hits," (Keveney, 2003, p. 1D). These shows rarely portray the show in a realistic manner. One reality TV producer said that he did not care about the accurate portrayal of romantic relationships, but telling a

passionate, provocative story (Keveney, 2003). Therefore, producers are aware of the distorted view of interpersonal relationships, but do not care as long as their show is getting good ratings.

Second, viewing half-hour network dating shows was a positive, significant predictor of ludas. Watching shows like *Elimi-Date* or *Blind Date* was related to believing that love is played in a game-like manner. These individuals view love as a conquest. That is the way that love is portrayed on these shows. The premise of the half-hour network dating shows is to show individuals in some type of competitive dating environment. "Instant love" is a phenomenon that is taking over reality TV (Peterson, 2003). "Instant love" refers to the portrayal of love as easy as long as you have the right connection and is something that occurs over a very short time. The half-hour network dating shows portray "instant love" in a competitive fashion as contestants compete for a partner's affection, usually against other contestants. It makes sense that two different types of relationship-related shows, that portray love very differently, would have a differing effect on the ludas love style. Focus group participants did not admit to liking either type of these shows, perhaps due to the focus group setting.

Also, documentary of everyday life shows were positively related to both a pragma and a mania love style. Watching shows like *Newlyweds* and *Real World* were related to love that is driven by one's head rather than one's heart and also highly volatile love. Perhaps this is representative of the love that is also portrayed on these shows. In the *Real World*, conflict is what keeps the show entertaining. When individuals coexist in a relationship while on the reality show, the producers tend to show the conflict that arises from the relationship, rather than the cooperative side of the relationship. TLC

shows focus more on the cooperative nature of the relationship. Watching domestic related shows such as *Supernanny, Trading Spouses*, and *Wife Swap* was positively related to an agape love style. This also makes sense because this is the type of love that is portrayed on these domestic-oriented shows. Apape, or motherly love, is portrayed on these domestic shows because the plot of the show often deals with the participant's family. Many times, contestants are portrayed as exhibiting this unconditional love towards their children. Therefore, of the significant relationships between love style and reality TV genre, it appears that individuals watch programs that align with their individual perspective on love.

Research question 4 examined the relationship between competition-based shows (documentary of everyday life, *Survivor, Apprentice*, and male-oriented shows) and machiavellianism. As a group, the competition-based shows did not significantly explain variance in machiavellianism, however, shows that were filmed in a documentary style, such as *Made, Real World, Next Top Model*, and *Newlyweds*, were found to positively predict machiavellianism. Perhaps, in general, people are more influenced by shows that are filmed in a documentary style. In this style it "appears" that the characters are more unaware of the camera, and more likely to "be themselves." Peyser (2004) attributes part of the success of *Big Brother* to the use of hidden cameras. He argues that while Survivor portrays contrived situations, the fact that in *Big Brother*, the cameras are not noticeable, allows contestants to relax and act more like themselves. Producers rely on conflict to achieve ratings, so they incorporate games, alcohol, or jobs to create conflict among the contestants (Stanley, 2006). I speculate that viewers could be influenced more

by the conflictive portrayal of interpersonal relationships when the setting is perceived as natural, which could lead to a more machiavellian view of others.

While the competition-based shows, as a group, did not help explain the variance in machiavellianism, reality television viewing was a significant predictor of machiavellianism (research question 1c). Therefore, it is not specifically the competition-based shows that are leading to a more machiavellian attitude, but reality TV shows, as a whole. This might be due to the fact that most reality shows involve some sort of competition (Adalian, 2005). In fact, two awards for reality TV programming at the 2007 Emmy awards were 'Outstanding reality program,' and 'Outstanding reality competition program,' (Rocchio, 2007). The competition-based shows are so numerous that they have their own Emmy award. One respondent in the focus group interview even discussed the evolution of *The Real World*. When the show first began, the contestants merely lived in the house and allowed themselves to be filmed. As the seasons went on the audience wanted more, so to create action, the producers introduced games, contests, alcohol, and jobs for the contestants. With most reality shows having an underlying premise of competition, not just competition-based shows, this could provide the audience with a competition-based ideology about relationships.

Research question 5 examined how reality TV viewing may mediate the relationship between TV viewing motives and either love styles, attachment styles, or machiavellianism. Reality TV viewing does partially mediate the relationship between motives and interpersonal perceptions in six instances. Interpersonal motives contributed to reality TV viewing, which, in turn, contributed to machiavellianism. Both positive

motives and interpersonal motives contributed to reality TV viewing, which, in turn, contributed to the avoidant attachment style.

Focus group interviewees briefly discussed the relationship between motives and the outcomes that viewers take away from the viewing experience. Respondents reported selecting what reality show to watch based on what immediate gratification they desired. If they just wanted to be entertained, they might watch a comical reality show such as *Newlyweds*. Some respondents reported watching a *Newlyweds* marathon on a Saturday if there was nothing else better to do. What they take away from the experience is different, based on what their motives are for watching. Respondents who watched the *Newlyweds* to be entertained leave the experience feeling relaxed from the comic relief they experienced. Individuals who report watching the *Newlyweds* marathon to give them something to do reported leaving the experience feeling a sense of companionship. Therefore, evidence of partial mediation indicates that when examining the television experience we must understand it as a process. The motives for watching affect the experience itself, which then affects what the viewer takes away from the experience.

More specifically, reality TV was found to mediate the relationship between interpersonal outcomes and machiavellianism, avoidant, secure, and pragma. Interpersonal outcomes were positively related to machiavellianism and to the avoidant attachment style, while being mediated by reality TV. Watching so one will not have to alone was negatively associated with reality TV viewing and positively related to reporting acting cunning in their relationships, to an avoidant attachment style, secure style, and pragma love style. Perhaps this is because individuals, who do not want to be alone, may not be turning on reality TV programs, but using other forms of

communication to interact with other people, such as the telephone, face-to-face, or Internet. Reality shows are even encouraging the use of other channels of communication, by utilizing them to keep their audience active (Holmes, 2004). They are asking viewers to cast votes via phone and Internet. For example, the audience's vote is deciding the 2008 *Biggest Loser-couples* series finale. Viewers are encouraged to either text message or vote online for who they think should be eliminated. Another show that relies on audience voting is *American Idol*. Each week the contestants are eliminated based on audience feedback. The audience actually gets a feeling that they are interacting with the characters they see on these reality TV shows. Further research should be conducted to determine how exposure to other forms of media might impact this relationship.

Also, reality TV was found to partially mediate the relationship between positive outcomes and the avoidant attachment style and the pragma love style. Watching reality TV because it is entertaining was positively associated with reality TV viewing, and negatively associated with an avoidant attachment style. Watching reality TV because it is entertaining was also positively associated with reality TV viewing, and positively associated with a pragma love style. I also believe individuals who watch reality TV to be entertained, are not likely to have an avoidant attachment style, but more likely yo have a pragma love style because the reason that they give for watching reality TV is individualistic. It is not social, therefore I do not think that the individual is seeking, or avoiding any type of social connection. They are using the reality TV show for personal motives, so they are not likely to have social outcomes.

Research question 6 asked if interpersonal attraction moderates the relationship between reality TV exposure and interpersonal relationship outcomes: love styles, attachment styles, or machiavellianism, and the results did not support this assumption. The amount that viewers related to their favorite reality characters did not change the impact of the reality TV viewing experience on the interpersonal relationship perceptions. There was a marginally significant result of interpersonal attraction moderating the relationship between reality TV viewing and ludas love style. The interaction term was significant at the 90% level, but that was not deemed acceptable for this investigation. This indicates that interpersonal attraction may be related to reality TV viewing but more research needs to be conducted to better understand this relationship.

When focus group interviewees were asked to talk about their favorite reality TV characters there was always a long pause before anyone responded. It was easy for individuals to tell me their favorite shows, but not as easy to name their favorite character. Many times individuals did not even know the character's name. Other focus group respondents would have to remind them. Research did not indicate that individuals initially felt close to these characters on reality TV shows. Perhaps this is because many of the shows do not have recurring characters week-to-week. In *Nanny 911, Fear Factor*, or *Wedding Story* different characters are featured in each episode. In shows like *Survivor* or *Amazing Race*, characters are eliminated each week, so it makes it difficult to 'get close to' the characters they see. Shows that features celebrities were the most likely to be named when discussing favorite characters. Many of the males discussed *Jackass*, and the females discussed *Newlyweds* when talking about their favorite characters. These shows feature the same main characters from week-to-week, so that is most likely

why most respondents mentioned these types of shows when discussing their favorite characters.

Theoretical Implications

This study added to the research on cultivation (Gerbner, 1973). There has been a call for research to examine genre-specific cultivation effects (Cohen & Weimann, 2000). This research controlled for overall television viewing and still found effects due to exposure to reality TV programming, thus supporting effects that are specific to the reality TV genre. Finding relationships between viewer perceptions and the values presented on these shows supports the notion of cultivation. For example, those individuals that watched TLC traditional sex-role reality shows did not have a ludas love style, or believe that love was played as a game. Those viewers who watched half-hour network dating shows did express a game-playing ludas love style. This is one example how the viewer's beliefs are related to the messages they are viewing. However, this is a departure from traditional cultivation research because the values learned are about the self and not the social reality. However, Rivadeneyra, Ward, and Gordon (2007) provide evidence of a cultivation effect on conceptions of self, and call for more research to understand this relationship.

This research also adds to the uses and gratifications approach (Rubin, 1981). One purpose of this research was to understand the gratifications sought from reality TV programming. What drives individuals to watch reality TV? Interpersonal outcomes and positive outcomes were both significantly related to reality TV viewing. Reality TV exposure was positively related to watching for entertainment, stimulation, excitement, or enjoyment. Watching reality TV so one would not have to be alone was positively

related to reality TV exposure. These findings replicated recent research by Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007). These were also the motives that I found to be significantly related to reality TV viewing. Therefore, it is important to understand the reasons viewers select reality TV programming. I also found it interesting that the focus groups discussed different ways that they used reality TV. Some watched it very closely, others multi-tasked while they "watched" the show. This finding indicates that not just quantity, but also quality of the exposure is important.

Putting these two theories together, the gratification/cultivation model (Bilandzic & Rossler, 2004) was useful to this study. These two approaches are complementary, and by combining both together it adds a greater understanding of the viewing experience. Focusing on the process of reality TV viewing has provided a better understanding of how individuals interact with reality TV.

Finding partial mediation in research question five provides support for the gratification/cultivation model (Bilandzic & Rossler, 2004). The model aims to understand to what extent the expectations that a viewer brings to the experience affect the outcome they take away. This is different from traditional cultivation research because instead of asking why cultivation is occurring, this model is asking if and to what extent. First, gratifications sought were examined in relation to reality TV viewing. Second, reality TV exposure was examined in relation to interpersonal outcomes (love styles, attachment styles, and machiavellianism). Since the expectations prior to the reality TV experience, exposure to reality TV, and post-viewing judgment about interpersonal outcomes were measured; this model meets the criteria for the gratification/cultivation model. Partial mediation was found, which indicates that the

direct effect of gratifications sought on outcomes obtained still remained, even when reality TV was entered into the model.

However, I speculate that there are other variables that affect judgments about the real world. Other predictor variables, such as direct experiences, personal communication, and other media, are accounted for in the gratification/cultivation model, but are not measured in this research. Perhaps these alternative predictors are the key to a deeper understanding of the relationship between gratifications for viewing and outcomes obtained.

This research also has implications for Cooley's concept of looking glass self (1964). Cooley proposed that individuals' use other's behavior as a yardstick to measure their own behavior. Cherry (2003) was the first to relate this concept to images that individuals view on the television. This dissertation also supports the looking glass self, but not from interpersonal interactions, but from their interactions with the media. Focus group transcripts indicated that through their dialogue, respondents were reporting all three steps of the looking glass self. First, individuals imagined how they might appear if they were on a reality show. Second, they interpreted other's reactions of their behavior on the show. Third, they developed feelings based on the imagined evaluation of others. Therefore, the respondents used reality TV to imagine and modify their own behavior based on the imagined perceptions of others. More research is needed to understand the relationship between television exposure and Cooley's looking glass self (1964).

Practical Implications

This research also has practical implications for both research and teaching. Regarding research, this study provides evidence of genre-specific effects. This research

found effects from reality TV viewing, while controlling for overall TV viewing. Therefore we can determine that some of the relations are specific to reality TV. Ludas and machiavellianism were significantly associated with reality TV viewing, but not associated with overall TV viewing. This corresponds with other research that has found genre-specific effects. Shannon and Nabi (2007) found that viewing reality and non-reality dating programs was associated with earlier sexual expectations, while viewing reality non-dating programs was associated with later sexual expectations. Cohen and Weiman (2000) found that among Israeli youth cultivation of fear was associated with the genre that the individual was exposed to. Therefore, fear was cultivated differently by different genres of media. More research should seek to understand how different genres are separate, yet also interrelated.

Media used to be a family experience. When there was only one television in the home and it was broadcast for only certain hours, on limited channels, people used to come together to watch television (Henslin, 2000). After concluding this study, I have come to realize that most people found their interaction with television to be an individual experience. Almost all focus group respondents owned their own TV, and tended to watch alone. Therefore, the respondents all had very specific individual motives for turning on the television, and specifically selecting a certain reality TV show. The TV viewing experience has become more individualistic.

The gratifications that are obtained are also individualistic, even though they may become social later, as individuals discuss reality TV with family and friends. The viewer may watch because they want to be entertained, and are glad they did when the show comes up in a discussion with friends. I do not think that people watch reality TV

shows just because they want to be able to stay abreast current entertainment news, but this may happen as an indirect effect. It may also become a social benefit when they appear knowledgeable in discussions with others. An individual's motive for watching relates to the way in which the TV is watched. Some people sat and adamantly watched every minute of the show. Other people turned on the TV while doing homework. There were also many variations in-between. People are interacting with the television in different ways. The manner in which the TV was watched was not measured, but most likely relates to the outcomes obtained from the reality TV experience. More research is needed to find a way to measure "how" people watch TV, and the personal experience that goes along with it.

When focus group participants talked about their favorite reality TV shows to watch they discussed shows that were on the same channel. They did not talk about liking a certain genre of reality TV, and changing channels to watch that particular genre. Instead, they reported watching a particular channel, and whatever genre of reality show came on next, they reported watching it. It appeared that individuals did not have a favorite genre of reality programming, but rather a favorite channel to watch reality shows on. Therefore, channel appeared to be more important in the respondent's choice of show than genre. This finding becomes important for conceptualizing reality TV viewing in future research.

There also appeared to be two distinctive reasons that individuals invited reality TV into their lives. They either used reality TV as a substitute for social interaction or as a way to provide a template for their life experiences. In both of these cases reality TV served a very different purpose. Individuals who used it as a substitute for social

interaction left the experience feeling cheered up, and watched shows where they felt a connection to the characters. Those individuals who watched reality TV to provide a template sought out reality TV to judge their everyday experiences. They went into the viewing experience seeking information about interpersonal interactions. They took the information they viewed and applied it to their everyday lives. These individuals left the reality experience feeling informed, rather than kept company. This dynamic relationship between reality TV and its viewed should be examined in further research.

One of the main goals of this research was to link the areas of mass communication and interpersonal communication. Individuals do not live in a social vacuum, all areas of communication overlap. Individuals watch reality TV for certain reasons and reality TV influences our perceptions of interpersonal communication. Reality TV gives strangers something to talk about at the water cooler, and has created many catch-phases used in popular culture, such as 'you're fired,' from *Apprentice*, 'the tribe has spoken,' from *Survivor*, and 'that's hot,' from *The Simple Life*. This study contributes to the research that connects mass communication and interpersonal relationship perceptions. By understanding how perceived relational beliefs are related to media exposure and expectations prior to media exposure we can understand how the contexts of mass and interpersonal communication overlap. The interrelationship between these two areas is inseparable, and should be studied as such. This research is one example how interconnected mass communication and interpersonal relationship perceptions are.

There are also practical implications for teaching. When teaching a media class, an instructor can hope that the students develop media literacy, or the ability to critically

analyze the messages they view. This research would provide students with examples of relationships between reality TV and its viewer's perceptions of interpersonal relationships. For example, ludas was found to be related to relationship-related reality TV shows. Therefore the portrayal of ludas on these shows needs to be examined in a critical analysis. How do the shows portray ludas, what are the messages that audiences may be getting specifically about love styles in these reality programs? This research is also useful in providing an example of how ideologies about interpersonal relationship perceptions are presented in these shows. By understanding the way relationships are portrayed, students can understand the way the media frames our thinking of interpersonal relationships.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. The first limitation was the use of college students as a sample. This resulted in a sample that was homogeneous in age and education level. Also, when conducting focus groups, I thought that individuals did not open up as much as they could have because of the fear of negative evaluation among their peers, therefore it may be better to conduct one-on-one interviews. The focus group sample came from one communication class and all of the students regularly saw each other. Unfortunately, they did not open up as much as I would have liked.

Second, many regression equations were used in this dissertation research. By using multiple regression equations, this increases the likelihood of Type I error. This occurs when by chance a relationship is found significant. This is due to the likelihood that when numerous equations are conducted a certain number of these relationships will be significant, just by random chance. To decrease the likelihood of this error occurring

a .01 alpha criterion was deemed appropriate. Therefore, the use of many regression equations was a limitation in this research.

Another limitation includes the low reliabilities of the subscales for both the love style and attachment style scales. These scales are both widely used in a variety of disciplines. Unfortunately some of the questions did not hold together with the rest of the scale. In the secure subscale, one of the items was deleted to slightly increase the reliability. The scale-if-item-deleted did not indicate that deleting any of the items on the attachment variables would increase the reliability; therefore the attachment subscales were used in full. I analyzed these variables keeping in mind the low reliability.

Also, the measure of reality TV viewing may be skewed. I relied on individuals to self-report the amount of reality TV shows that they watched. Self-report is generally a good ballpark figure (Babbie, 1998), but it is difficult for individuals to remember the exact amount of time they spent watching TV, and even more specifically reality TV.

This study was conducted several years after the beginning of the reality TV phenomenon. This type of programming was still relatively new and many shows were experimental. These results are temporally and culturally situated. Culture influences not only what reality TV shows are broadcast, but also how individuals perceive these shows. Although this study is only representative of the Midwestern United States, it would be interesting to see how the reality TV viewing experience might be different across the globe. Reality TV is a rapidly changing genre, with new shows broadcast everyday, and current shows constantly adapting. Reality TV has also recently been broadcast on youtube.com. Reality TV is not just in the TV realm, but is overlapping

onto the Internet. This research is still relevant today, but there are new dynamics that are emerging everyday.

Another limitation is that this study utilized a cross-sectional design, which means that the results represent one single point in time. This creates questions about the order of the variables. Are people who are machiavellian more likely to watch reality TV, or are people learning their machiavellian thinking from these reality shows? I used the uses/gratifications model as a guide to predict the direction of these relationships. However, it would also be useful to track the same individuals before a new reality TV series that they intended to watch, and after the series ended, to further understand the direction of the effect.

Another limitation is the measure of reality TV viewer motives. Traditional uses and gratifications research and measures overall television viewing and then determines how it relates to various sub-genres. However, I specifically asked participants their reasons for watching reality TV. Similar to Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007), I thought that individuals could accurately self-report the reasons that they specifically choose to watch reality TV. However, relating the motive variables to the reality TV viewing variable, makes the argument appear circular. This is a limitation of the study that was not predetermined. Further research is needed to understand the relationship between how accurate viewers are in reporting their motives for specific genres of television viewing.

The last limitation related to the manner in which I measured exposure. My research measured just number of hours that individuals self-reported watching reality TV. After conducting the focus group interviews, I realized that the context in which the

exposure was occurring was important. For example, if the individual "watched" while they did other tasks simultaneously, or if they were highly focused on the show, made a difference in the level of attention that they gave to the show. An appropriate measure might be one the included both the quality and quantity of time watching reality television programming.

Future Directions

This study has provided the basis for several future directions for research. This study had two separate measures, one of reality TV viewing, and one of overall TV viewing. Future research could create a measure that would reflect the dynamic nature of television exposure. Instead of measuring just the number of hours viewed, also measuring how the viewing occurred. Was the individual only watching TV, or were they also doing something else simultaneously? How many times a day do reality TV viewers talk about what they view on these shows? These are questions that would aid researchers in developing a scale to measure how reality TV is being watched. These variables are important, both in the gratifications sought, but also on what is taken away after the experience. Future research is needed to develop a measure of how TV is viewed.

Another area of future research is to understand how reality TV relates to other forms of media, and also other interpersonal channels. Focus group interviewees all reported using the telephone, e-mail, or Internet to find out more information about a reality show that they had seen on TV. It would be interesting to find out how the other forms of media reinforce what the individual viewed on the reality show. Many of the respondents also reporting talking to others about what they saw on reality TV programs.

Individuals felt like they had to watch to stay on top of current events. One respondent indicated that in one of her classes, the entire class took a vote about who was going to be the next one eliminated on *American Idol*. It is clear that interpersonal channels of communication are overlapping with mass communication channels in many ways.

Future research should also focus on unraveling the relationship between media effects and relationship beliefs. While this research studied love style, attachment style, and machiavellianism, there are many more relational ideologies that are cultivated through the media. What do viewers learn about relationships at work, or familial relationships? There are many types of relationships that are portrayed on the television. These relationships need to be researched to discover how media messages impact the manner in which viewers perceive their own interpersonal relationships.

Conclusion

This study added to the literature in several ways. First, the methods employed combined both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. A thematic analysis performed on the focus group interview data provided much insight into the relationships that were discovered from analyzing the survey data. The use of these two methods, helped in understanding not just the relationships that exist, but also perceptions individuals have about these relationships.

Second, by combining the gratification research and the cultivation research, this dissertation examined media as a process. I found reality TV to be a partial mediator in three regression models, indicating the importance of understanding the link between gratifications sought, media exposure, and outcomes. The findings indicated that there were differential cultivation effects based on the gratifications that the viewer sought

from the experience. Therefore, this research shows a clear link between gratifications sought and cultivation of reality TV.

Thirdly, this dissertation added to the genre-specific research on reality TV viewing. New relationships were uncovered between motives for viewing reality TV, reality TV exposure, love styles, attachment styles, and machiavellianism. This study found support for reality TV mediating the relationship between motives and effects. More research needs to be conducted in this area to better understand this relationship. Reality TV is different from mainstream TV, and should be studied as such.

Reality TV shows are influencing people in many ways. They pervade our popular culture. You cannot hide from reality TV; it is everywhere: in discussions with others, in magazines or newspapers, on the Internet, and even on billboards. This dissertation suggests that reality shows might even affect the manner in which people perceive interpersonal relationships. There are many other factors that go into an individual's ideology, but this study concluded that reality TV is related to an individual's interpersonal relationship perceptions.

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Footnotes

[1] Names used in reporting the qualitative results have been changed to protect subject confidentiality.

[2] This may appear as a circular argument, having motives for watching reality TV predicting reality TV viewing. I understand that traditionally the uses and gratifications approach measures motives of overall TV viewing, and then examines how they may relate to various sub-genres. This research, measured the motives for viewing reality TV shows. This is because I wanted to know what the viewer's motives were for specifically selecting reality TV programming, not television in general. Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) created a reality TV motives scale to measure reality TV viewer motives. Like this dissertation, Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007), believed that respondents are conscious enough of their reasons for specifically watching reality TV programming, that they could articulate it in their responses to a reality TV motives scale.

[3] While this reliability is low, I acknowledge this and will take keep this in mind as I interpret these results. Secure was deemed an important variable to compare with the anxious and avoidant attachment styles. Secure was inversely related to the avoidant and anxious attachment styles.

Table 1: *Factor Loadings for the 27-item Viewer Motive scale with 4-Factor Solution.*

Item	Factor 1: Positive outcomes	Factor 2: Interpersonal outcomes	Factor 3: Relaxation/ escape	Factor 4: Passing the time outcomes
Exciting (17, arousal)	.80	.15	.32	.08
Enjoyable (14, entertainment)	.77	.03	.39	.22
Amusing (23, entertainment)	.74	-.02	.37	.25
I like to watch (12, habit)	.74	.07	.35	.27
Entertaining (5, entertainment)	.73	.00	.34	.34
Something to do with friends (6, social)	.68	.15	.16	.27
So I can talk about the show (15, social)	.64	.29	.06	.13
Stimulating (8, arousal)	.64	.27	.28	.02
To cheer oneself up (26, arousal)	.63	.33	.32	.01
So I can be with other people who are watching (24, social)	.57	.31	.15	.17
To feel less lonely (20, companionship)	.13	.76	.14	.21
To avoid being alone (2, companionship)	.04	.74	.21	.17
To learn about what could happen (25, information)	.48	.65	.03	-.08
So I can get away from others (18, escape)	.12	.63	.34	.15
When there is no one else to be with (11, companionship)	.13	.61	.22	.34

Item	Factor 1: Positive outcomes	Factor 2: Interpersonal outcomes	Factor 3: Relaxation/ escape	Factor 4: Passing the time outcomes
To unwind (10, relaxation)	.39	.17	.75	.18
To rest (19, relaxation)	.26	.26	.71	.17
To forget about things (9, escape)	.31	.21	.68	.22
Because it is relaxing (1, relaxation)	.35	.16	.67	.07
To get away from what one is doing (27, escape)	.28	.33	.50	.36
When there is nothing better to do (4, pass time)	.08	.06	.11	.81
Because it is there (3, habit)	.12	.09	.05	.78
It passes the time when I am bored (13, pass time)	.18	.13	.27	.73
It gives me something to do to occupy my time (22, pass time)	.30	.31	.20	.63
Helps me learn about others And myself (7, information)	.61	.51	.07	-.11
So I can learn how to do new things (16, information)	.49	.59	-.01	-.04
It's a habit (21, habit)	.36	.35	.24	.37

Note. The number in parentheses is the item number from the survey and the subscale that the item was supposed to be related with.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics for demographic variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Valid N
Year in school	2.33	1.08	1	6	442
Age	20.10	3.29	17	60	442
Sex (1=male)	.37	.48	0	1	442
Feminist (1=feminist)	.17	.38	0	1	442
Race (1=white)	.85	.36	0	1	442
Age of first relationship	16.82	1.85	13	37	408

Table 3

Table of descriptive statistics for the main variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Reliability (if scale)	Valid N
Listavg (amt. of reality TV viewed)	1.45	.33	1.00	2.92	N/A	406
Avoidant (attach. style)	2.73	.72	1.00	5.00	.71	439
Anxious (attach. style)	2.56	.71	1.00	5.00	.71	439
Secure (attach. style)	3.47	.66	1.30	5.00	.52	436
Ludas (love style)	2.38	.95	1.00	5.00	.71	440
Storge (love style)	3.20	1.00	1.00	5.00	.88	441
Eros (love style)	3.74	.73	1.00	5.00	.63	442
Pragma (love style)	2.92	.83	1.00	5.00	.63	442
Mania (love style)	3.05	.78	1.00	5.00	.54	441
Agape (love style)	3.23	.73	1.00	5.00	.65	440
Positive outcomes	3.06	1.02	1.00	5.00	.94	438
Interpersonal outcomes	1.91	.81	1.00	5.00	.83	438
Relaxation outcomes	2.96	1.06	1.00	5.00	.87	439
Passing time outcomes	3.41	.99	1.00	5.00	.82	438
Machiavellianism	2.11	.62	1.00	4.90	.87	432
Perceived reality	2.30	.70	1.00	4.40	.79	440
Interpersonal Attraction	1.93	1.35	0.00	3.00	N/A	442

Documentary shows	2.00	.84	1.00	4.27	.90	431
Traditional sex role shows	1.34	.54	1.00	4.57	.88	434
Network dating shows	1.65	.73	1.00	5.00	.81	439
Male-oriented shows	1.78	.63	1.00	3.83	.75	440
Domestic shows	1.21	.42	1.00	3.80	.78	436

Table 4

Bivariate correlations between motives, reality TV sub-genres, reality TV viewing, attachment styles, and machiavellianism

	Reality TV viewing	Secure (attach. style)	Anxious (attach. style)	Avoidant (attach. style)	Mach. score
Positive outcomes	.62**	.08	.02	-.13**	.02
Interpersonal outcomes	.28**	-.12*	.19**	.10*	.19**
Relaxation outcomes	.47**	.07	.03	-.08	-.02
Passing time outcomes	.36**	-.03	.05	.07	.08
Reality TV viewing	--------	.07	.02	-.01	.06
Domestic shows	.54**	-.01	.01	.03	.02
Half-hour network dating shows	.59**	.05	.04	.02	.12*
Traditional sex-role shows	.56**	.09	-.10*	-.10*	-.12*
Documentary shows	.87**	.08	-.04	-.06	.02
Male-oriented shows	.68**	.05	.08	.00	.16**
Survivor	.26**	-.09	.17**	-.05	.05
Apprentice	.25**	.01	.04	-.05	.04

** Indicates significance at the .01 level. * Indicates significance at the .05 level.

+ Indicates significance at the .10 level.

Table 5

Bivariate correlations between motives, reality TV sub-genres and love styles

	Ludas	Storge	Eros	Pragma	Mania	Agape
Positive outcomes	.07	.08	.04	.21**	.15**	-.04
Interpersonal outcomes	.13**	.10*	-.03	.23**	.25**	.10*
Relaxation outcomes	.05	.12*	.01	.13**	.13**	-.02
Passing time outcomes	.07	.09	.05	.17**	.18**	.04
Reality TV viewing	.13*	.09+	.11*	.18**	.15**	-.03
Domestic shows	.10*	.11*	.01	.11*	.07	.01
Half-hour network dating shows	.18**	.06	.05	.01	.10*	-.06
Traditional sex-role shows	-.09	.10*	.05	.15**	-.05	-.12*
Documentary shows	.07	.02	.06	.24**	.11*	-.30**
Male-oriented shows	.17**	.06	.14**	.03	.13**	.14**
Survivor	.03	.03	.02	-.04	.15**	.14**
Apprentice	-.03	.00	-.01	.04	-.03	-.03

** Indicates significance at the .01 level. * Indicates significance at the .05 level. + Indicates significance at the .10 level.

Table 6

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for motives predicting machiavellianism and attachment styles (RQ 1A & 1B)

	Reality TV view		Mach		Avoid attach style		Anxio attach style		Secure Attach Style	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step 1										
Age	.00 (.01)	-.07	-.02 (.01)	-.09*	.01 (.01)	.05	.01 (.01)	.05	-.01 (.01)	-.07
Sex	-.19 (.03)	-.29***	.38 (.06)	.30***	-.06 (.07)	-.04	.15 (.07)	.10*	.02 (.07)	.01
Fem status	-.11 (.04)	-.12*	.05 (.08)	.03	.05 (.10)	.02	.28 (.09)	.14**	-.16 (.09)	-.09
Race	-.10 (.04)	-.11*	.00 (.08)	.00	-.21 (.10)	-.10*	.06 (.09)	.03	.14 (.09)	.08
R^2	.10***		.08***		.01		.03**		.01	
Step 2										
Post. Out.	.18 (.02)	.58***	.03 (.04)	.05	-.18 (.05)	-25***	-.02 (.05)	-.03	.08 (.05)	.13
Inter. Out.	-.04 (.02)	-.11*	.20 (.04)	.26***	.19 (.05)	.22***	.22 (.05)	.25***	-.19 (.05)	-.23***
Relax Out.	.01 (.02)	.04	-.13 (.04)	-.22**	-.07 (.05)	-.10	-.07 (.05)	-.10	.09 (.05)	.13
Pass time	.02 (.02)	.06	.06 (.03)	.10	.10 (.04)	.13*	.04 (.04)	.05	-.04 (.04)	-.07

	Reality TV view	β	Mach	β	Avoid attach style	β	Anxio attach style	β	Secure Attach style	β
R^2	.42***		.14***		.07***		.07***		.05***	
ΔR^2	.32**		.06*		.06*		.04*		.04*	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Table 7

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for motives predicting reality TV viewing and love styles (RQ 1B)

	Ludas love style		Storge love style		Eros love style		Pragma love style		Mania love style		Agape love style	
	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step1	.01	.04	-.03	-.09	.01	.06	-.02	-.06	.00	.00	.00	.04
Age	(.01)		(.02)		(.01)		(.01)		(.01)		(.01)	
Sex	.20	.10*	-.13	-.07	-.03	-.02	-.25	-.14	-.02	-.01	.45	.30***
	(.10)		(.10)		(.07)		(.08)		(.08)		(.07)	
Fem status	.19	.07	.03	.01	-.08	-.04	.13	-.06	.14	.07	-.06	-.04
	(.12)		(.13)		(.10)		(.11)		(.10)		(.09)	
Race	-.27	-.10*	-.30	-.11*	.05	.03	.10	.04	-.09	-.04	.24	.12*
	(.13)		(.13)		(.10)		(.11)		(.10)		(.09)	
R^2	.02*		.02*		.00		.02*		.00		.10***	
Step2												
Post out	-.06	.07	-.07	-.07	.07	.10	.12	.15*	.03	.04	-.02	-.02
	(.07)		(.07)		(.05)		(.06)		(.06)		(.05)	
Inter out	.13	.11	.05	.04	-.08	-.08	.20	.20**	.22	.23***	.14	.16**
	(.07)		(.07)		(.06)		(.06)		(.06)		(.05)	
Relax out	-.06	-.07	.12	.12	-.03	-.05	-.12	-.15*	-.07	-.09	-.70	-.10
	(.07)		(.07)		(.05)		(.06)		(.06)		(.05)	
Pass out	.06	.06	.01	.01	.05	.07	.06	.08	.09	.12*	.07	.10
	(.06)		(.06)		(.04)		(.05)		(.04)		(.04)	
R^2	.03**		.02*		.00		.07***		.06***		.12***	

	Ludas love style	β	Storge love style	β	Eros love style	β	Pragma love style	β	Mania love style	β	Agape love style	β
Δ R^2	.01		.00		.00		.05*		.06*		.02	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Table 8

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for reality TV viewing predicting love styles (RQ1C)

	Storge		Ludas		Eros		Pragma		Mania	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Age	-.03 (.02)	-.10	.01 (.02)	.02	.02 (.01)	.05	-.02 (.01)	-.07	.00 (.01)	.00
Sex	.00 (.12)	.00	.40 (.11)	.20***	.08 (.09)	.06	-.09 (.10)	-.05	.06 (.09)	.04
Feminist status	.05 (.14)	.02	.30 (.13)	.12*	-.09 (.10)	-.04	-.07 (.11)	-.03	.18 (.11)	.09
Race	-.33 (.14)	-.12*	-.19 (.13)	-.07	.09 (.10)	.05	.02 (.11)	.01	-.02 (.11)	-.01
TV viewing	-.01 (.01)	-.12*	-.01 (.01)	-.07	.00 (.00)	-.07	-.01 (.01)	-.15*	.00 (.00)	.00
Reality TV viewing	.34 (.18)	.11	.60 (.17)	.21***	.36 (.13)	.16**	.52 (.15)	.20***	.39 (.14)	.17**
R^2	.03**		.05***		.02		.05***		.02	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 9

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for reality TV viewing predicting Agape love style, attachment styles, and machiavellianism (RQ1C)

	Agape		Secure		Avoidant		Anxious		Mach	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Age	.01 (.01)	.03	.00 (.01)	-.02	-.00 (.01)	-.02	.01 (.01)	.06	-.02 (.01)	-.11*
Sex	.47 (.08)	.31***	.12 (.08)	.09	-.16 (.08)	-.11*	.16 (.08)	.11*	.41 (.07)	.33***
Feminist status	-.04 (.09)	-.02	-.16 (.09)	-.09	.08 (.10)	.04	.25 (.10)	.13*	.07 (.08)	.04
Race	.24 (.10)	.12*	.07 (.09)	.04	-.14 (.10)	-.07	.10 (.10)	.05	.08 (.08)	.05
TV viewing	.01 (.00)	.07	.00 (.00)	-.15**	.01 (.00)	.20**	.01 (.00)	.08	.00 (.00)	.06
Reality TV viewing	.10 (.12)	.05	.27 (.11)	.14*	-.26 (.13)	-.12*	.10 (.13)	.05	.24 (.10)	.13*
R^2	.11***		.02*		.03*		.03**		.11***	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 10

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for perceived reality moderating reality TV viewing and love styles (RQ2)

	Storge		Ludas		Eros		Pragma		Mania	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step 1										
Reality TV viewing	.29 (.15)	.09	.36 (.15)		.25 (.11)	.11*	.44 (.13)	.17**	.35 (.12)	.15**
R^2	.01		.01*		.01*		.03***		.02**	
Step 2										
Perceived reality	.06 (.08)	.04	.08 (.08)		-.07 (.06)	-.06	.21 (.06)	.17**	.04 (.06)	.04
R^2	.01		.01*		.01*		.05***		.02**	
ΔR^2	.00		.00		.00		.02*		.00	
Step 3										
Interaction: Reality TV/ perceived reality	-.05 (.21)	-.07	-.00+ (.20)		-.09 (.15)	-.18	-.59 (.17)	-1.06***	-.10 (.16)	-.20
R^2	.00		.01		.10		.08***		.02*	
ΔR^2	.00		.00		.00		.03*		.00	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Table 11

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for perceived reality moderating reality TV viewing and agape love style, attachment styles, and machiavellianism (RQ2)

	Agape		Secure		Avoidant		Anxious		Mach	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step 1										
Reality TV viewing	-.06 (.11)	-.03	.14 (.10)	.07	-.05 (.11)	-.02	.04 (.11)	.02	.11 (.09)	.06
R^2	.00		.00		-.00		-.00		.00	
Step 2										
Perceived reality	-.06 (.06)	-.06	.04 (.05)	.05	-.12 (.06)	-.12*	-.01 (.06)	-.01	.08 (.05)	.09
R^2	.00		.00		.01		-.01		.01	
ΔR^2	.00		.00		.01		.00		.00	
Step 3										
Interaction: Reality TV/ perceived reality	.05 (.15)	.11	.03 (.13)	.07	.07 (.15)	.14	-.03 (.15)	-.05	-.21+ (.13)	-.50
R^2	.00		.00		.01		-.01		.01	
ΔR^2	.00		.00		.00		.00		.01	

Note . *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001;+p<.10. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Table 12

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for relationship related reality shows predicting love styles (RQ 3)

	Ludas		Storge		Eros		Pragma		Mania	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step 1							-.01	-.06	.00	.01
Age	.01 (.01)	.05	-.03 (.02)	-.10	.02 (.01)	.07	(.01)		(.01)	
Sex	.24 (.10)	.12*	-.10 (.10)	-.05	.06 (.09)	.04	-.24 (.09)	-.14**	-.02 (.08)	-.01
Feminist	.19 (.13)	.07	.00 (.14)	.00	-.11 (.10)	-.05	-.13 (.11)	-.06	.12 (.11)	.06
Race	-.22 (.13)	-.08	-.33 (.14)	-.12*	.06 (.10)	.03	.06 (.11)	.03	-.07 (.11)	-.03
R^2	.02		.02		.00		.02*		.00	
Step 2										
Network ½ hr. dating shows	.22 (.07)	.17**	.06 (.07)	.05	.01 (.05)	.01	-.10 (.06)	-.09	.10 (.06)	.09
Domestic shows	.22 (.12)	.10	.23 (.13)	.10	-.04 (.09)	-.03	.07 (.11)	.03	.08 (.10)	.04
Traditional shows	-.25 (.10)	-.14*	.12 (.11)	.06	.04 (.08)	.04	.04 (.09)	.03	-.20 (.08)	-.13*

	Ludas B (SE B)	β	Storge B (SE B)	β	Eros B (SE B)	β	Pragma B (SE B)	β	Mania B (SE B)	β
Everyday life shows	.11 (.07)	.10	-.14 (.07)	-.11	.07 (.05)	.09	.21 (.06)	.21**	.13 (.06)	.14*
R^2	.07**		.02*		.00		.05**		.02*	
ΔR^2	.05*		.01		.00		.03		.02	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Table 13

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for relationship related reality shows predicting agape love style and attachment styles (RQ 3)

	Agape		Secure		Avoidant		Anxious	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step 1								
Age	.01 (.01)	.04	-.01 (.01)	-.07	.01 (.01)	.05	.01 (.01)	.05
Sex	.46 (.07)	.31***	.02 (.07)	.01	-.05 (.07)	-.03	.18 (.07)	.12*
Feminist	-.06 (.09)	-.03	-.15 (.09)	-.09	.06 (.10)	.03	.23 (.10)	.12*
Race	.22 (.09)	-.03*	.08 (.09)	.05	-.15 (.10)	-.07	.06 (.10)	.03
R^2	.11***		.01		.00		.02*	
Step 2								
Network dating shows	-.06 (.05)	-.06	.00 (.05)	.00	.08 (.05)	.08	.07 (.05)	.07
Domestic shows	.24 (.09)	.14**	-.07 (.08)	-.05	.10 (.09)	.06	.10 (.09)	.06
Traditional shows	-.04 (.08)	-.03	.13 (.07)	.11	-.19 (.08)	-.14*	-.09 (.08)	-.07

	Agape	β	Secure	β	Avoidant	β	Anxious	β
	B		B		B		B	
	(SE B)		(SE B)		(SE B)		(SE B)	
Everyday	-.01	-.01	.06	.08	-.08	-.09	-.00	-.01
life shows	(.05)		(.05)		(.05)		(.05)	
R^2	.12***		.01		.02		.02*	
ΔR^2	.01		.00		.02		.00	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Table 14

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for competition-based shows predicting machiavellianism (RQ 4)

	Mach	
	B (SE B)	β
Step 1		
Age	-.02 (.01)	-.09*
Sex	.39 (.06)	.30***
Feminist	.05 (.08)	.03
Race	.03 (.08)	.02
R^2	.09***	
Step 2		
Documentary of everyday life	.09 (.05)	.12*
Survivor	-.01 (.04)	-.01
Apprentice	.02 (.03)	.03
Male-oriented shows	.04 (.06)	.04
R^2	.10***	

	Mach	β
Δ R^2	.01	

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Table 15

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for interpersonal attraction moderating reality TV viewing and love styles (RQ6)

	Storge		Ludas		Eros		Pragma		Mania	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step 1										
Reality TV viewing	.29 (.15)	.09	.18 (.22)	.13*	.24 (.11)	.11*	.45 (.13)	.17***	.35 (.12)	.15**
R^2	.01		.01*		.01*		.03***		.02**	
Step 2										
Interpersonal Attraction	-.00 (.04)	-.00	.03 (.04)	.04	-.01 (.03)	-.01	.03 (.03)	.04	.00 (.03)	.01
R^2	.00		.01*		.01		.03**		.02*	
ΔR^2	.00		.00		.00		.00		.00	
Step 3										
Interact	-.12 (.14)	-.26	-.25 (.13)	-.60+	-.02 (.10)	-.05	-.14 (.11)	-.39	-.03 (.11)	-.12
R^2	.00		.02*		.00		.03**		.02*	
ΔR^2	.00		.01		-.01		.00		.00	

Note. Interact = Interaction term between reality TV and interpersonal attraction. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001;+p<.10. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

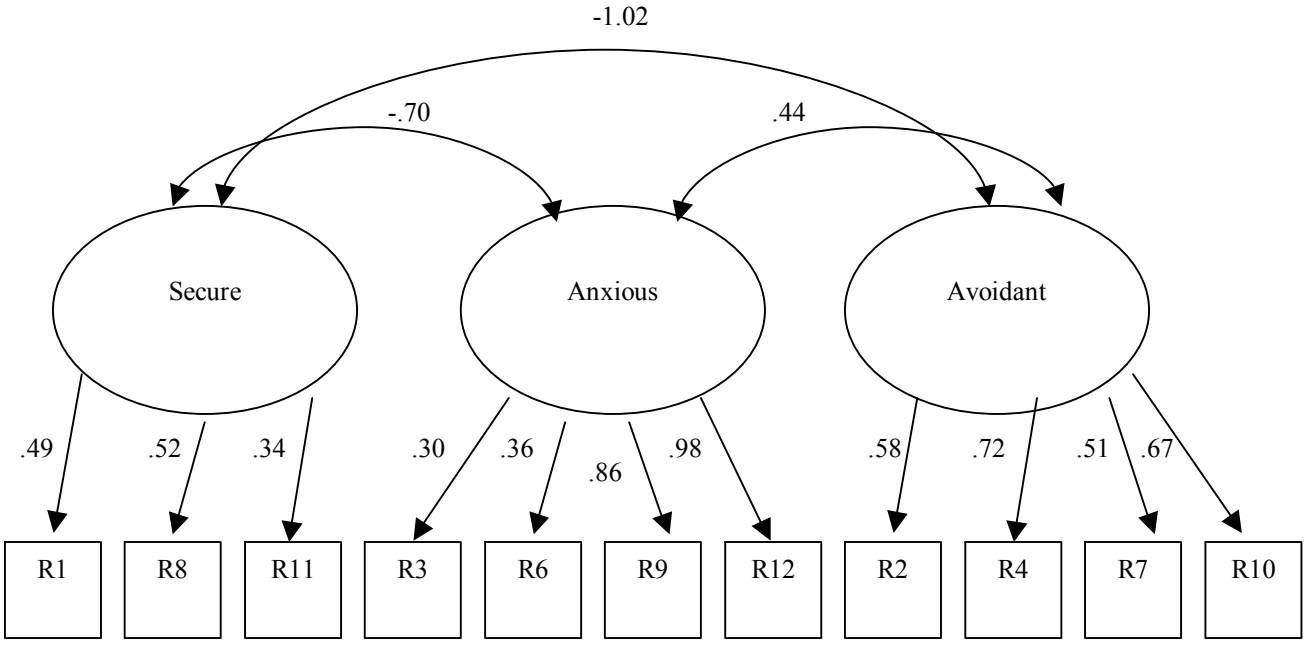
Table 16

Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for interpersonal attraction moderating reality TV viewing and agape love style, attachment styles, and machiavellianism (RQ6)

	Agape		Secure		Avoidant		Anxious		Mach	
	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β	B (SE B)	β
Step 1										
Reality TV viewing	-.07 (.11)	-.03	.13 (.10)	.07	-.00 (.11)	-.01	.04 (.11)	.02	.11 (.09)	.06
R^2	.00		.00		-.00		-.00		.00	
Step 2										
Interpersonal Attraction	.01 (.03)	.01	.05 (.03)	.10	-.01 (.03)	-.14*	-.01 (.03)	-.02	-.00 (.03)	-.00
R^2	.00		.01		.01*		-.00		-.00	
ΔR^2	.00		.01		.01		.00		.00	
Step 3										
Interact	.09 (.10)	.29	-.06 (.09)	-.21	-.03 (.10)	-.10	-.08 (.10)	-.27	-.15 (.08)	-.55+
R^2	.00		.01		.01		-.01		.00	
ΔR^2	.00		.00		.01		.00		.01	

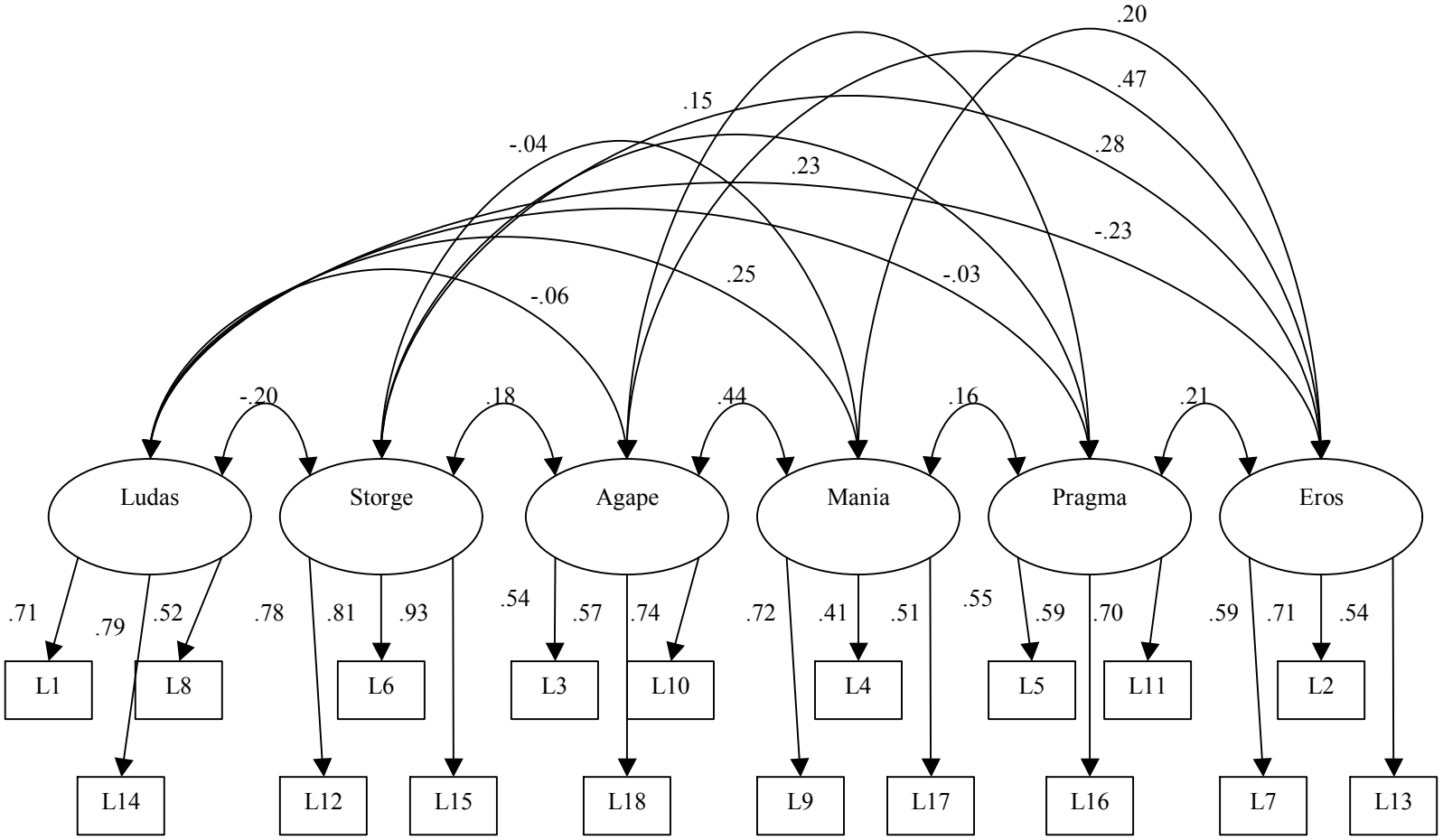
Note. Interact = Interaction term between reality TV and interpersonal attraction. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001;+p<.10. Control variables were entered in Step 2, although they are not reported on this table.

Figure 1. Confirmatory factor analysis of the 11-item Attachment Style Index.



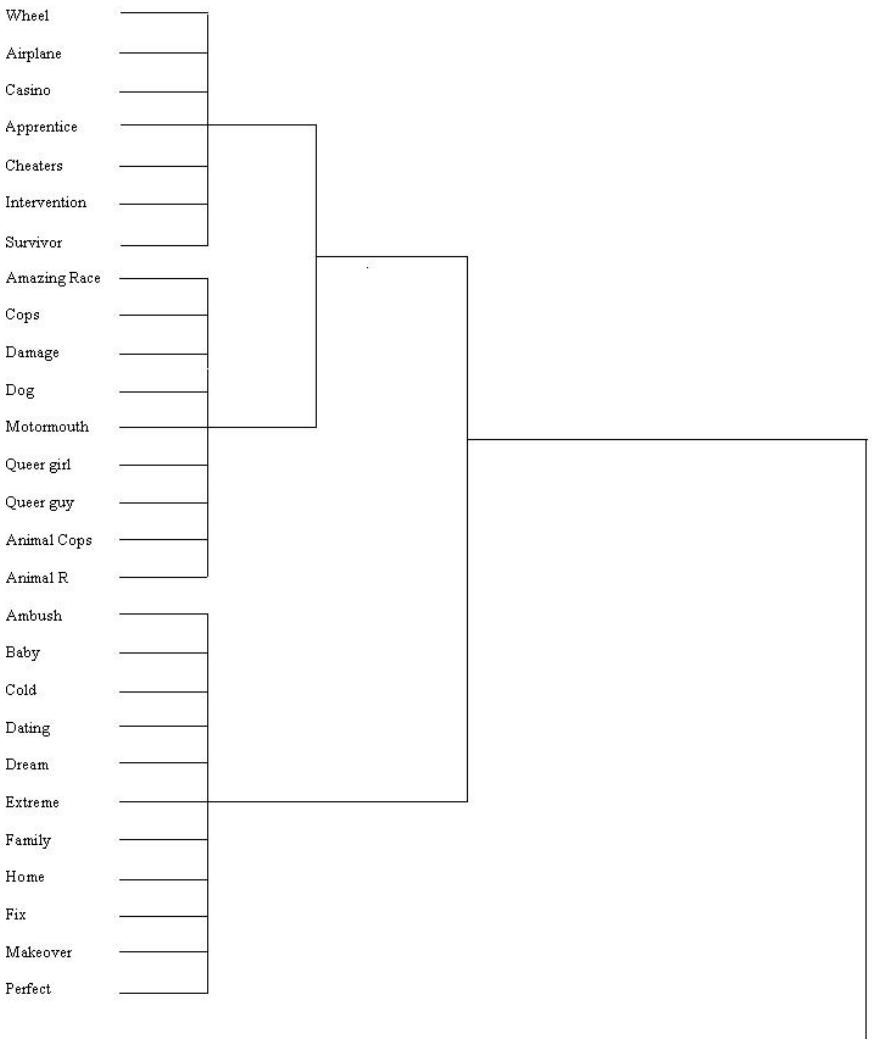
Note. x^2 (N = 435) = 3.38, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .07.

Figure 2. Confirmatory factor analysis of the 18-item Love Style Index.



Note. x^2 (N = 435) = 2.39, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06

Figure 3. Cluster analysis results of reality TV shows



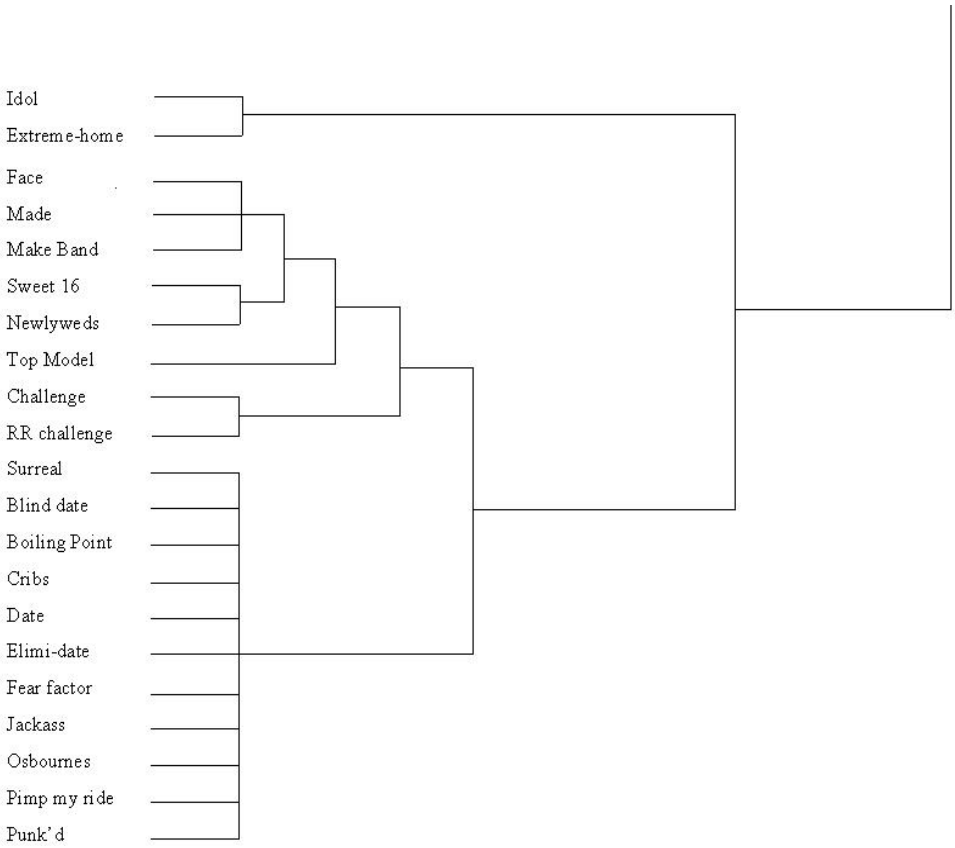
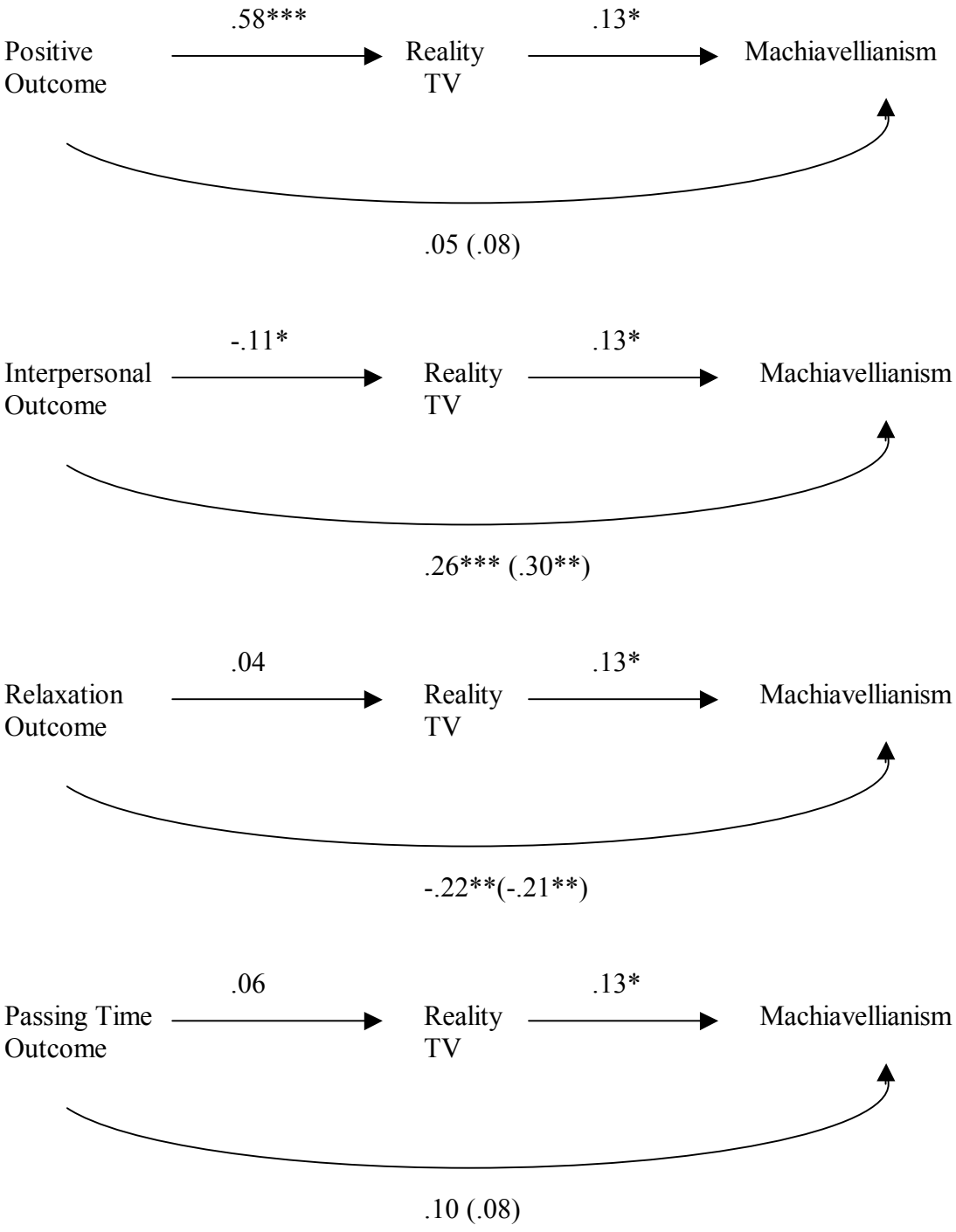
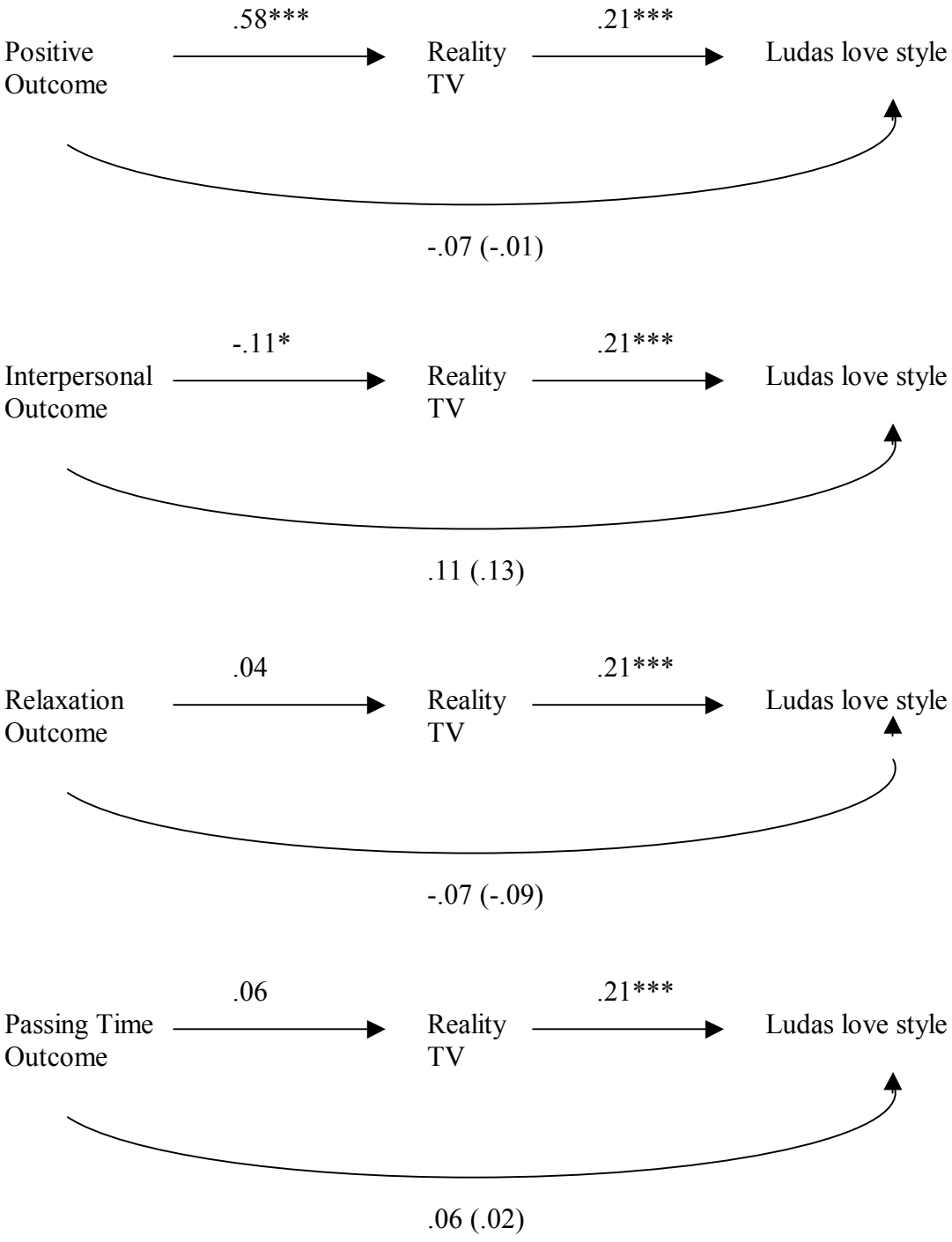

Idol
Extreme-home
Face
Made
Make Band
Sweet 16
Newlyweds
Top Model
Challenge
RR challenge
Surreal
Blind date
Boiling Point
Cribs
Date
Elimi-date
Fear factor
Jackass
Osbournes
Pimp my ride
Punk'd

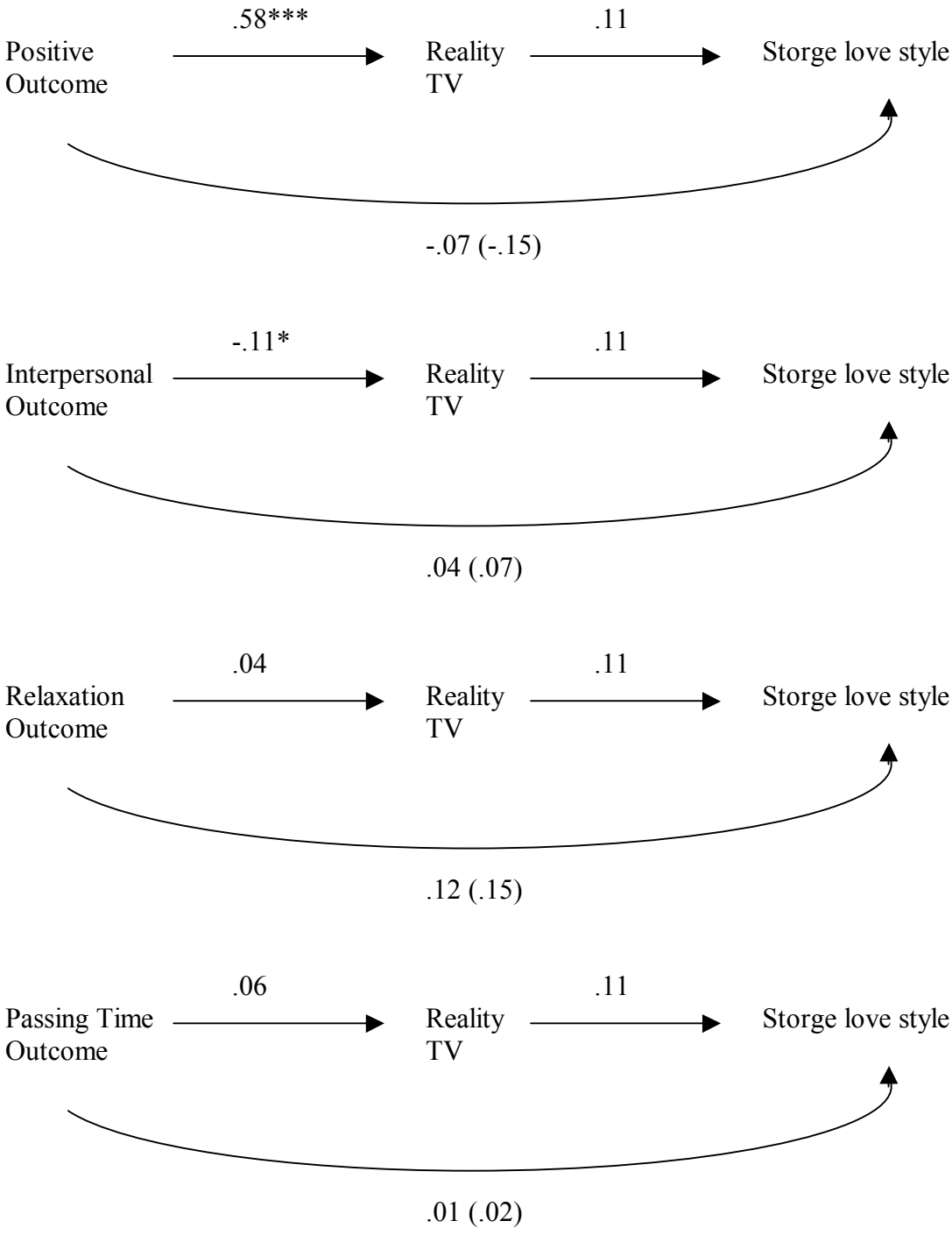
Figure 4. Examining path relationships for mediation in machiavellianism (RQ 5).

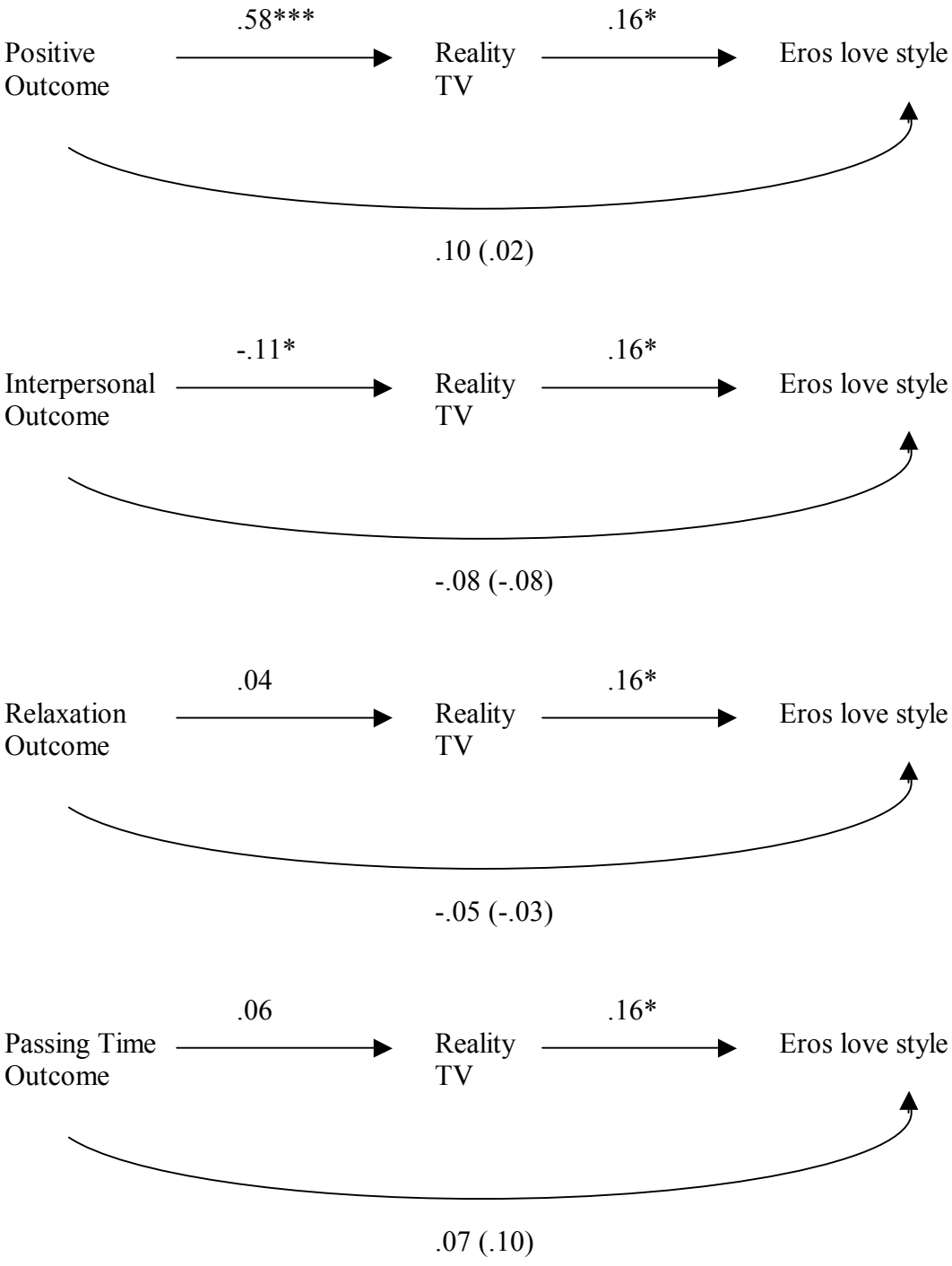


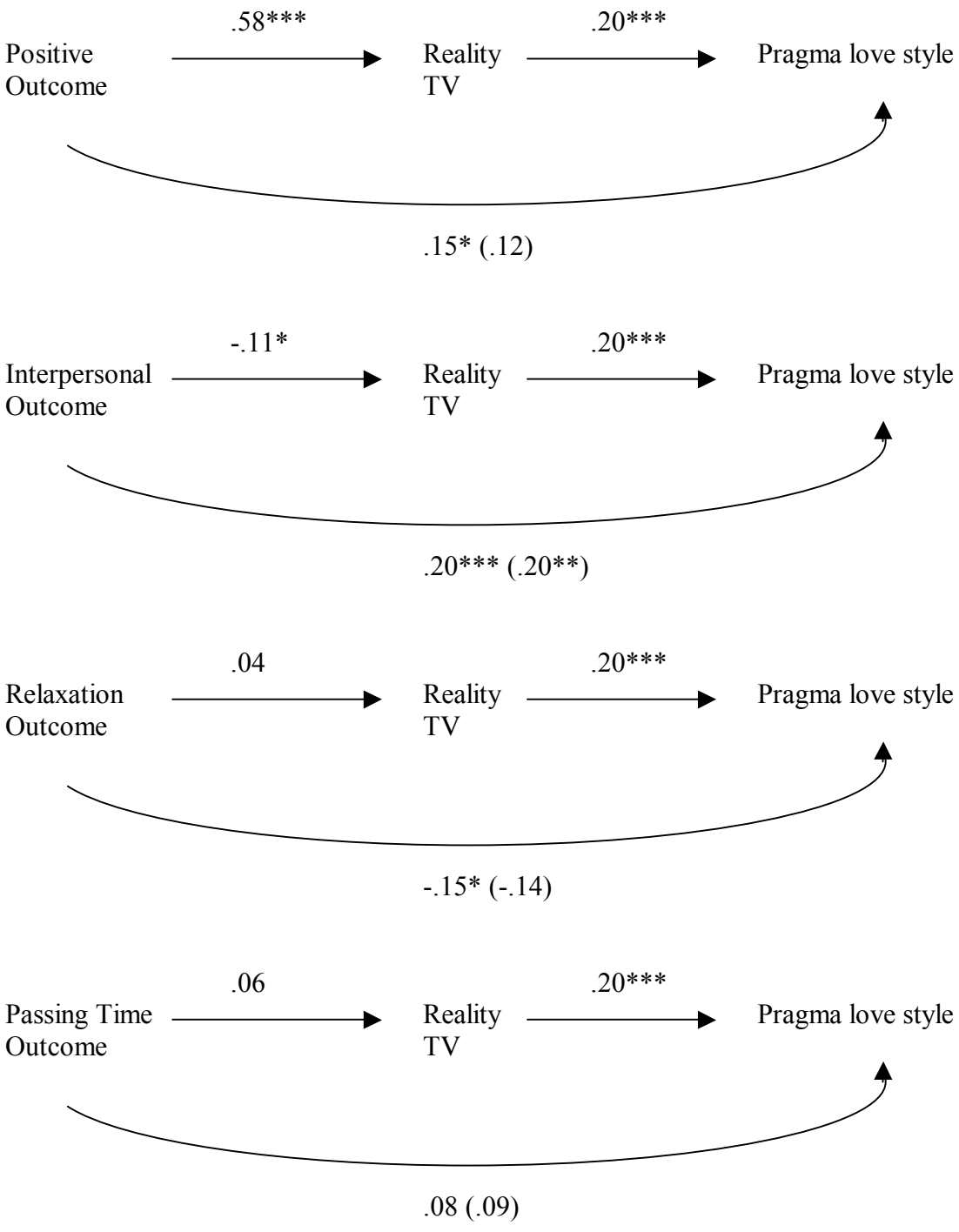
Note. These numbers came from the previous tables of regression results from research question one. Post mediation effect is in parentheses.

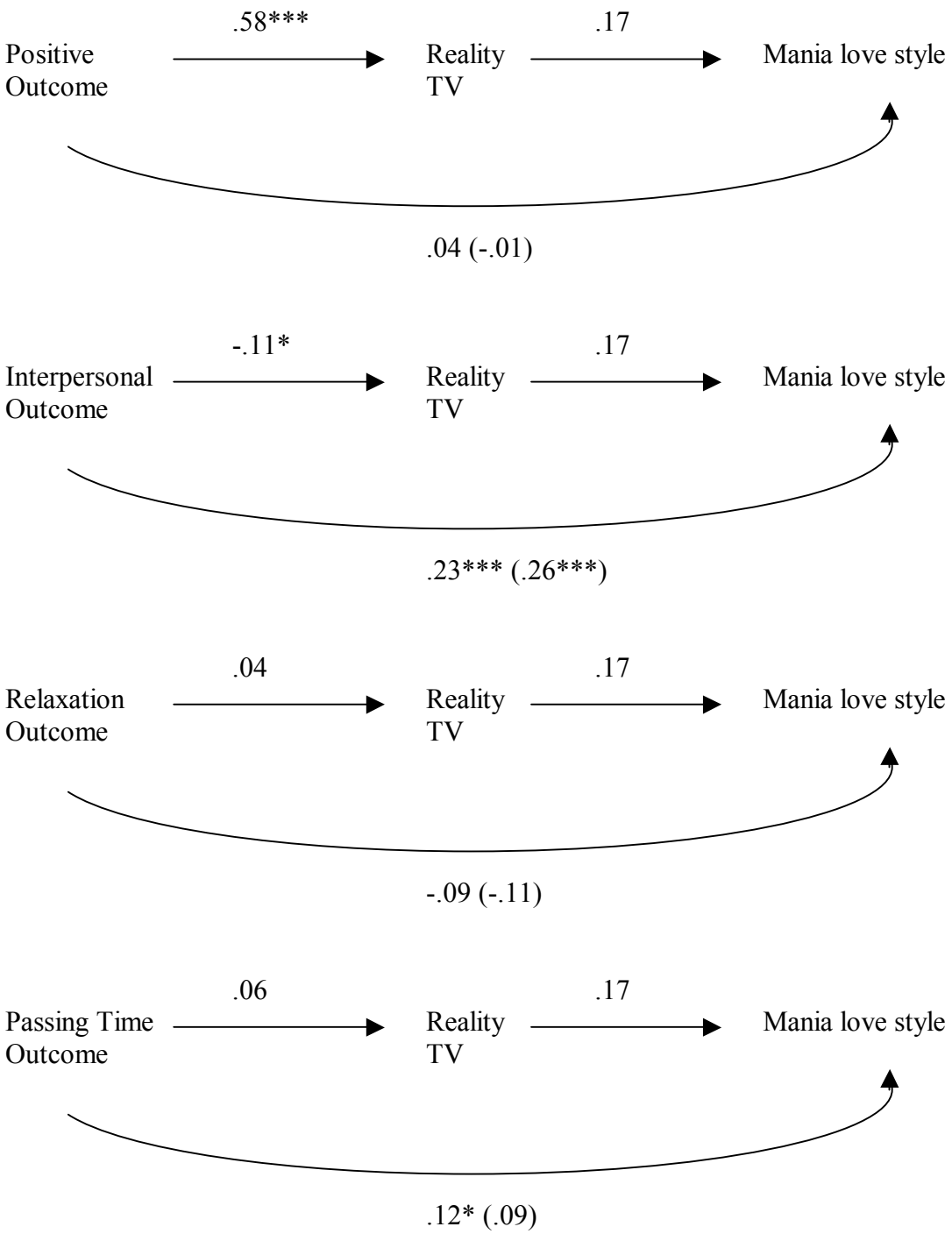
Figure 5. Examining path relationships for mediation in love styles (RQ 5).

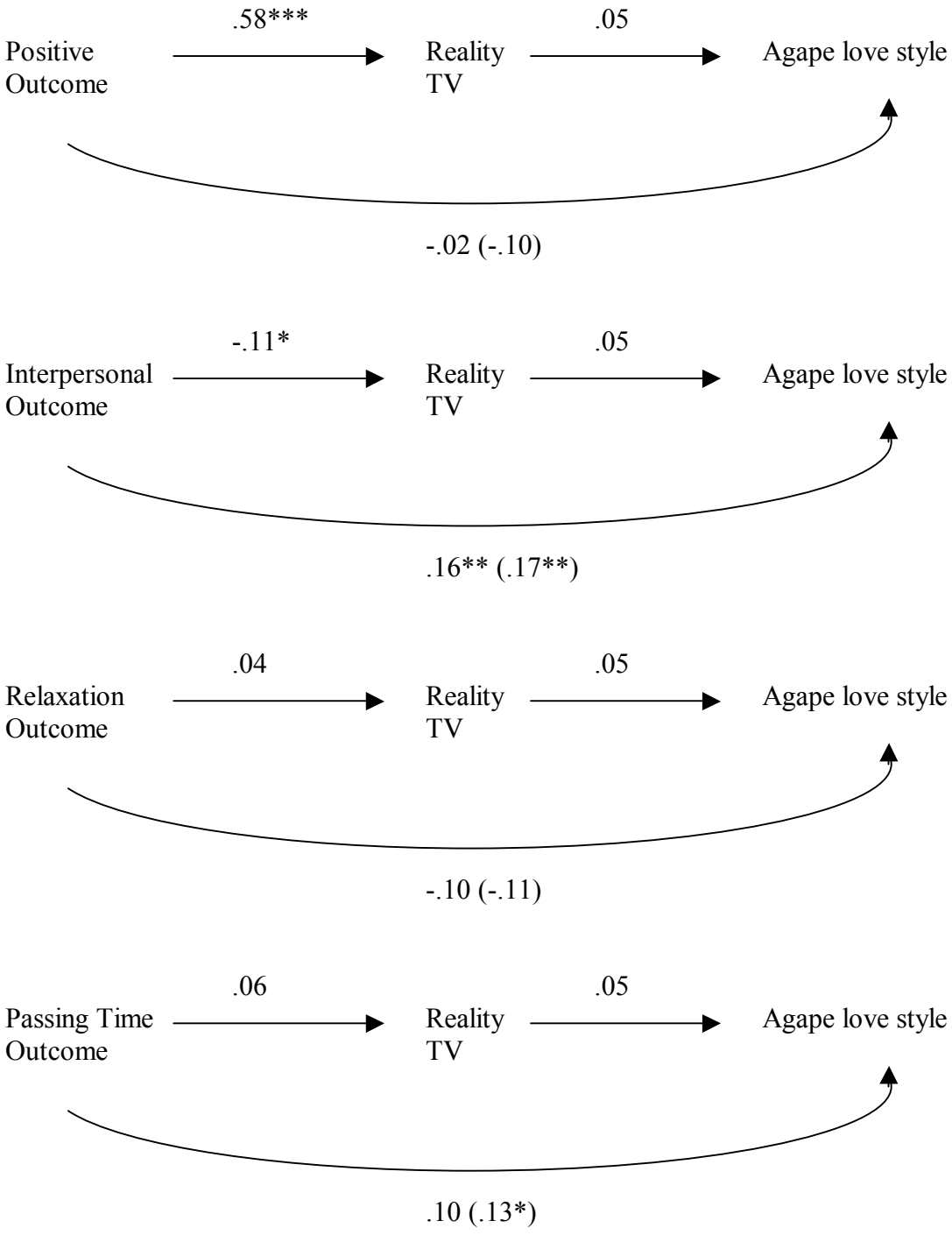



.58***
.11
Positive Outcome
Reality TV
Storge love style
-.07 (-.15)
-.11*
.11
Interpersonal Outcome
Reality TV
Storge love style
.04 (.07)
.04
.11
Relaxation Outcome
Reality TV
Storge love style
.12 (.15)
.06
.11
Passing Time Outcome
Reality TV
Storge love style
.01 (.02)


.58***
.16*
Positive Outcome
Reality TV
Eros love style
.10 (.02)
-.11*
.16*
Interpersonal Outcome
Reality TV
Eros love style
-.08 (-.08)
.04
.16*
Relaxation Outcome
Reality TV
Eros love style
-.05 (-.03)
.06
.16*
Passing Time Outcome
Reality TV
Eros love style
.07 (.10)

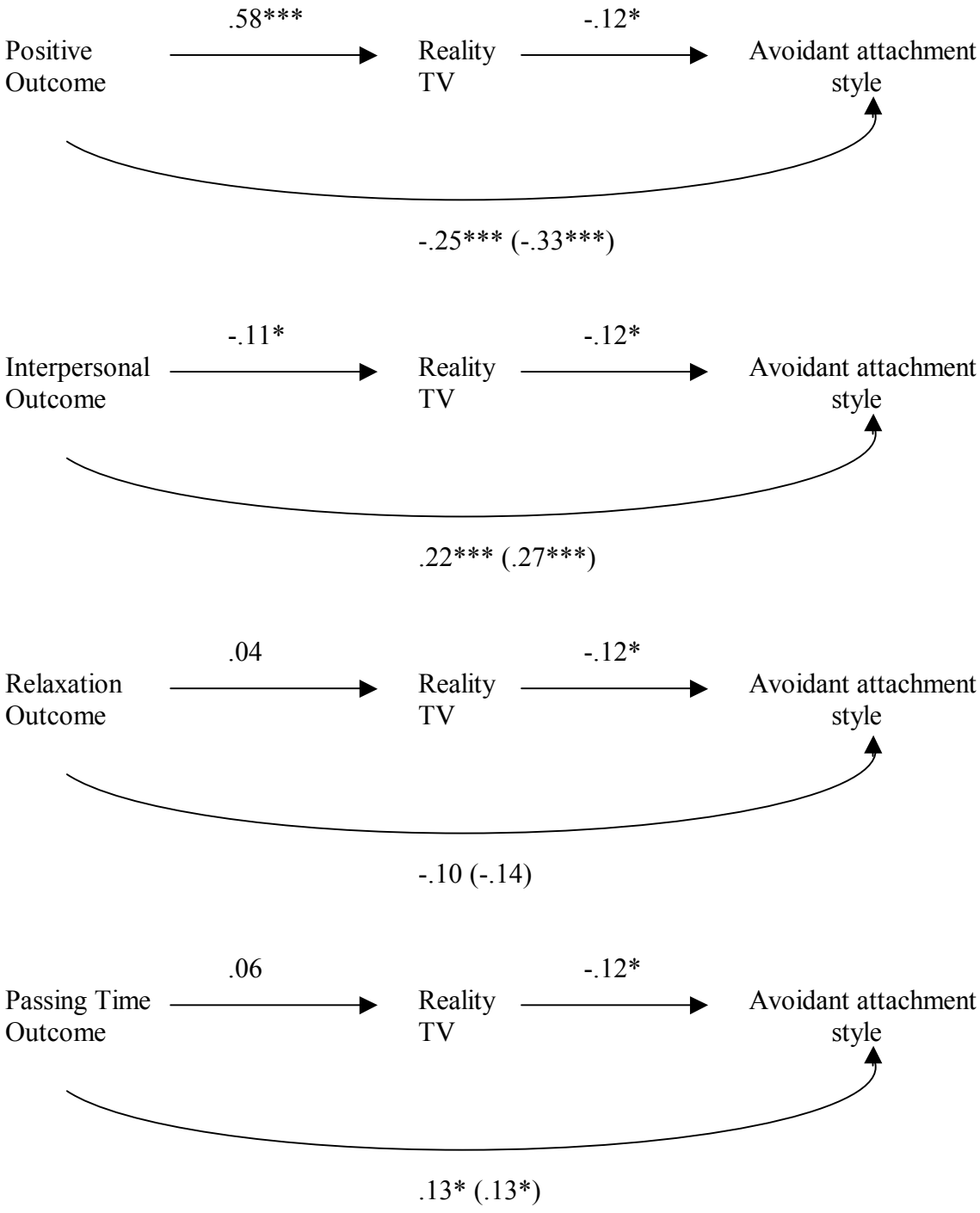

.58***
Positive Outcome
Reality TV
.20***
Pragma love style
.15* (.12)
-.11*
Interpersonal Outcome
Reality TV
.20***
Pragma love style
.20*** (.20**)
.04
Relaxation Outcome
Reality TV
.20***
Pragma love style
-.15* (-.14)
.06
Passing Time Outcome
Reality TV
.20***
Pragma love style
.08 (.09)

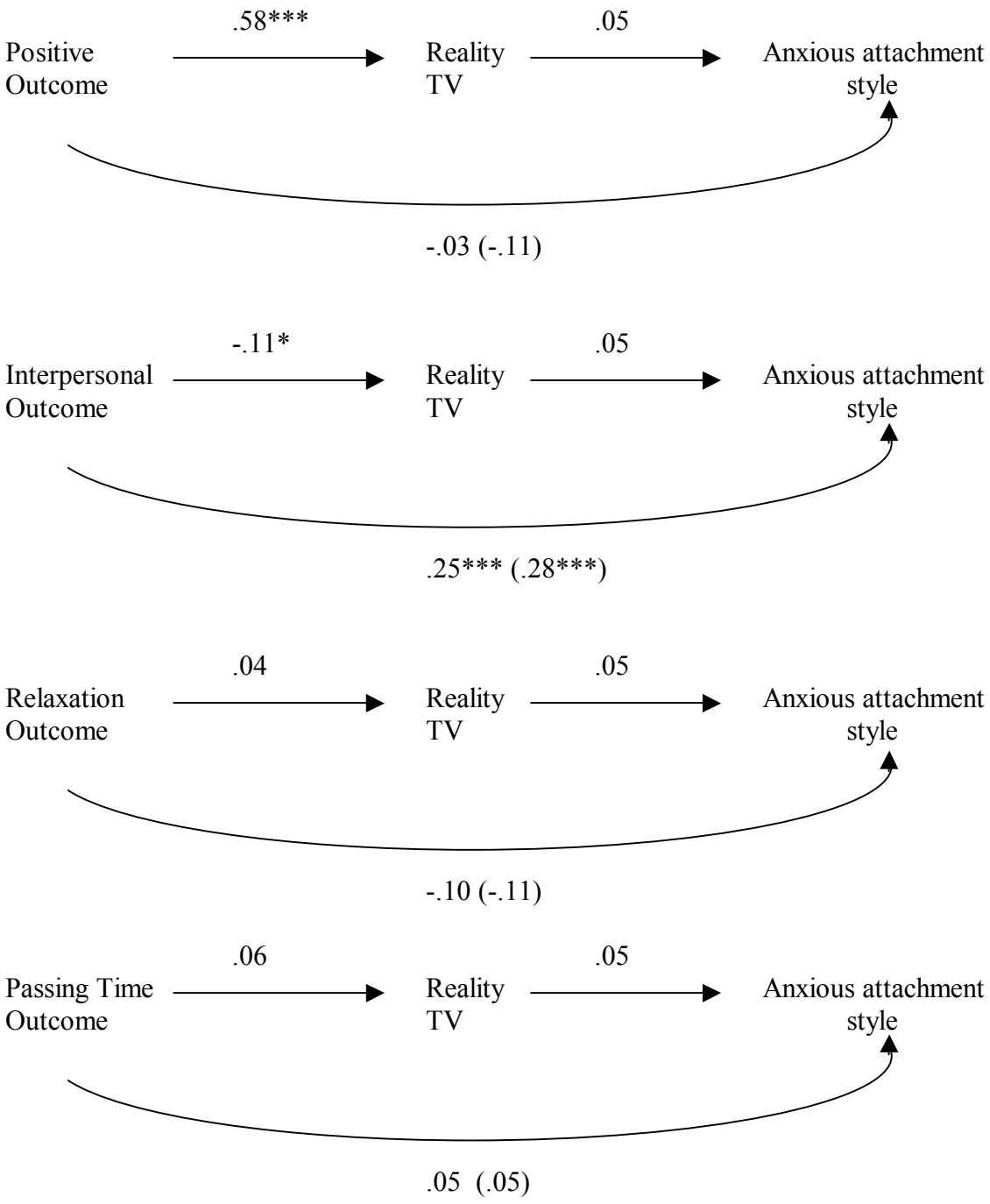

.58***
.17
Positive Outcome
Reality TV
Mania love style
.04 (-.01)
-.11*
.17
Interpersonal Outcome
Reality TV
Mania love style
.23*** (.26***)
.04
.17
Relaxation Outcome
Reality TV
Mania love style
-.09 (-.11)
.06
.17
Passing Time Outcome
Reality TV
Mania love style
.12* (.09)

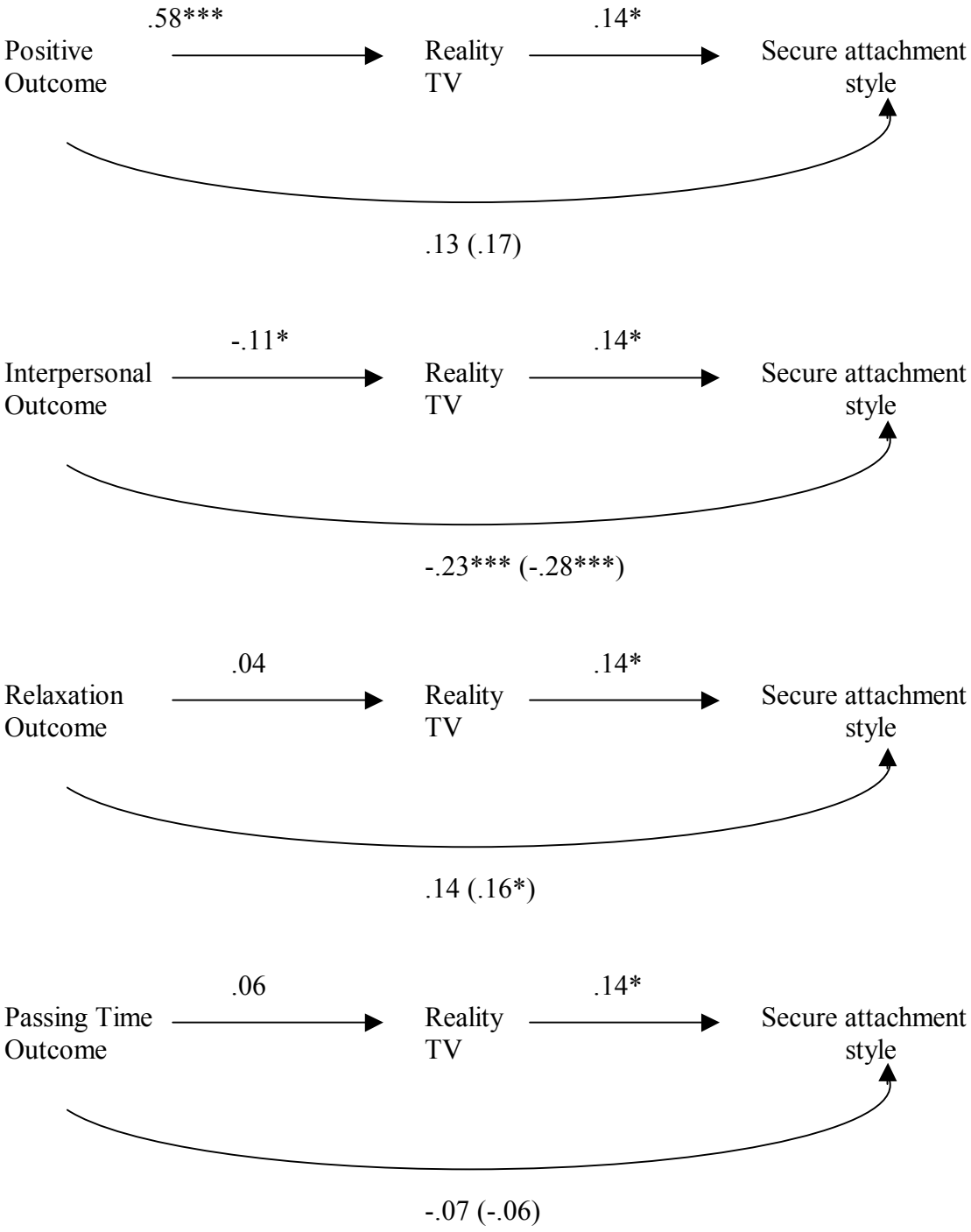


Note. These numbers came from the previous tables of regression results from research question one. Post mediation effect is in parentheses.

Figure 6. Examining path relationships for mediation in attachment styles (RQ 5).




.58***
.05
Positive Outcome
Reality TV
Anxious attachment style
-.03 (-.11)
-.11*
.05
Interpersonal Outcome
Reality TV
Anxious attachment style
.25*** (.28***)
.04
.05
Relaxation Outcome
Reality TV
Anxious attachment style
-.10 (-.11)
.06
.05
Passing Time Outcome
Reality TV
Anxious attachment style
.05 (.05)



Note. These numbers came from the previous tables of regression results from research question one. Post mediation effect is in parentheses.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Reality Show Premises

Reality Show (Network in parentheses)	Type Of Show	Premise of Show
5th Wheel (WB)	Competitive-Romantic	Two couples are set up on a double date, and then one sexy single is introduced to stir up the mix.
Airline (A&E)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Cameras follow the experiences of Southwest airlines and it's employees at several hubs.
Amazing Race (CBS)	Competitive-Game	Teams complete puzzles as they travel across the world, rushing to beat the other teams.
Ambush Makeover (UPN)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Contestants are selected off the street and given a makeover.
American Casino (Discovery)	Documentary-Everyday	Cameras depict the Green Valley Ranch Resort casino and it's

	Life	operations.
American Idol (FOX)	Competitive-Talent	Contestants sing to compete for a recording contract.
Animal Cops (Animal Planet)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Investigators bust individuals who are committing crimes involving animals.
Animal Miracles (Animal Planet)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Stories of miraculous recoveries of animals in unfortunate situations.
Baby Story (TLC)	Documentary-Everyday Life	A couple is followed as they bring a new baby into the world.
Blind Date (UPN)	Competitive-Romantic	Cameras follow two strangers on a first date.
Boiling Points (MTV)	Competitive-Game	Individuals push unsuspecting stranger's tempers in awkward situations. If the strangers do not lash out, they win money.
Caesars 24/7 (A&E)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Cameras depict employees and gamblers in the Caesars Palace in Vegas.
Cheaters (WB)	Documentary-Problem	Individuals are captured by hidden cameras cheating on their partners

		and confronted.
Cold Turkey (PAX)	Competitive-Game	Contestants are filmed in their struggle to quit smoking. A cash prize motivates success.
Cops (WB)	Documentary-Everyday	Police are filmed as they uphold the law.
Cribs (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Famous individuals show off their homes.
Damage Control (MTV)	Competitive-Game	Parents set up their teen and leave for "vacation." Out-of-the-ordinary events occur, cameras record it all, and parents watch. They win money if they correctly predict the teen's behavior.
Date my mom (MTV)	Competitive-Romantic	Males date three moms and then select a daughter to date based on their experiences with their mother.
Dating Story (TLC)	Documentary-Everyday Life	A couple is followed through their dating experiences.
Dog the Bounty Hunter (A&E)	Documentary-	Bounty hunter Duane 'Dog'

	Everyday Life	Chapman is followed on the job.
Dream Job (ESPN)	Competitive-Talent	Contestants compete for a NBA analyst position.
Elimi-date (WB)	Competitive-Romantic	Individuals date four people. They eliminate one at a time until they pick their date.
Extreme Makeover (ABC)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Experts transform individuals with plastic surgery, and beauty makeovers.
Extreme Makeover: Home Edition (ABC)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Experts transform individuals' houses with complete renovations.
Family Plots (A&E)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Cameras uncover the happenings in the busiest mortuary in southern California.
Fear Factor (NBC)	Competitive-Game	Contestants compete in a series of challenges to overcome their fear.
Gastineau Girls (E!)	Documentary-Everyday Life	The mother and daughter of former New York Jets football star Mark Gastineau are looking for love.
Growing up Gotti (A&E)	Documentary-	Mob daughter-author Victoria

	Everyday Life	Gotti is followed in her life.
Home Delivery (WGN)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Contestants are surprised in their homes with makeovers.
I Want a Famous Face (MTV)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Fans are made to look like the star they worship.
In a Fix (TLC)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Hosts help contestants fix up their houses.
Intervention (A&E)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Friends and family confront their loved ones through a real surprise intervention.
Jackass (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Jonny Knoxville and friends perform absurd pranks, stunts, and antics.
Knievel's Wild Ride (A&E)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Follows the life of Evil Knievel's son Robbie as he lives the daredevil life.
Made (MTV)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Individuals are transformed into something they want to be with the help of some experts.

Makeover story (TLC)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Individuals are followed as their lives are given a complete makeover.
Making the Band (MTV)	Competitive-Talent	Contestants compete to win a slot in a band.
Motor mouth (VH1)	Competitive-Game	Friends set up individuals as they are captured singing in the car, to compete to be the best "motor mouth."
My Super Sweet 16 (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Cameras follow individuals as they plan and host their sixteenth birthday party.
Newlyweds (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Cameras follow Jessica Simpson and Nick Lackey and their experiences.
Nanny 911 (FOX)	Documentary-Problem-Solving	A team of nannies is sent to live with various families and to help them deal with problem children.
Next Top Model (UPN)	Competitive-Talent	Females compete for a modeling contract.
No Opportunity Wasted (Discovery)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Challengers are given $3,000, 72 hours and the opportunity to live their dream.

Osbornes (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	A look at the life of Ozzy Osborne and his family life.
Perfect Proposal (TLC)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Stories of women and how their boyfriends proposed to them.
Pimp my Ride (MTV)	Documentary-Problem Solving	West Coast Customs revamps automobiles that really need it.
Project Greenlight (BRAVO)	Competitive-Talent	Contestants compete to fulfill the director position in a horror movie.
PoweR Girls (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Show following several girls as they work PR jobs.
Punk'd (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Aston Kucher sets up individuals in awkward circumstances and captures their reactions.
Queer Eye for the Straight Girl (BRAVO)	Documentary-Problem Solving	The 'Fab Five' homosexual men help a female gain a sense of style.
Queer Eye For the Straight Guy (BRAVO)	Documentary-Problem	The 'Fab Five' homosexual men help a male gain a sense of style.

	Solving	
Real World/Road Rules Challenge (MTV)	Competitive-Game	Contestants from the Real World compete against contestants from Road Rules in a series of challenges to determine the ultimate winner.
Road to Stardom (UPN)	Competitive-Talent	Contestants travel across the country with Missy Elliot in her tour bus competing to become a star performer.
Room Raiders (MTV)	Competitive-Romantic	Individuals select one of three contestants for a date after they examine their bedrooms.
Second Chance (TLC)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Stories of individuals who are given a second chance at love.
Showdog Moms and Dads (BRAVO)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Five owners of show dogs are followed and their experiences captured.
Single in the City (WE)	Documentary-Everyday Life	A series following a group of women and their dating experiences one summer in New York.

Strange Love (VH1)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Brigitte Nielsen and Flavor Flav explore their love as viewers watch their relationship progress.
Starlet (WB)	Competitive-Talent	Contestants compete for an acting role.
Starting Over (FOX)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Stories of women who define their goals and outline the steps needed to achieve those goals with the help of life coaches.
Super Nanny (ABC)	Documentary-Problem Solution	A nanny travels around to various families to help them deal with the obstacles of family life.
Surreal Life (VH1)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Seven second-rate celebrities are filmed living together.
Survivor (CBS)	Competitive-Game	Two tribes compete in challenges as the rough it in the outdoors, to be the last contestant on the island.
The Apprentice (NBC)	Competitive-Game	Contestants compete for a position working for Donald Trump.
The Ashlee Simpson Show (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday	Cameras follow Ashlee Simpson and her experiences in her music

	Life	career.
The Bachelor (ABC)	Competitive-Romantic	Twenty women date an eligible bachelor, until he narrows it down to only one woman.
The Contender (NBC)	Competitive-Talent	Contestants compete to become a professional boxer.
The Real World (MTV)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Individuals are filmed as they live together.
The Simple Life (FOX)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Cameras follow Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie as they perform various intern jobs.
Trading Spaces (TLC)	Documentary-Problem Solving	Individuals redecorate one room of another's house, as one room in their house is being redecorated.
Trading Spouses (FOX)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Two different spouses trade lives for a week and live in the life of the other.
Wanna Come In? (MTV)	Competitive-Romantic	Individuals coached by a dating coach through an earpiece throughout their date, with the ultimate goal of being invited inside at the end of the date.

Wedding Story (TLC)	Documentary-Everyday Life	A couple is followed through the planning and execution of their wedding.
Wickedly Perfect (CBS)	Competitive-Talent	Joan Lunden hosts as twelve people compete in beautifying a home.
Wife Swap (ABC)	Documentary-Everyday Life	Wives from two different families live in each other's lives for a week.

Breakdown of Reality Show Type by Channel

	Competit.-Romantic	Competit.-Talent	Competit.-Game	Doc.-Problem-Solving	Doc.-Everyday Life	Total
A&E	0	0	0	0	7	7
ABC	1	0	0	3	1	5
AP	0	0	0	0	2	2
BRAVO	0	1	0	2	1	4
CBS	0	1	2	0	0	3
DISC	0	0	0	1	1	2
E!	0	0	0	0	1	1
ESPN	0	1	0	0	0	1
FOX	0	1	0	1	3	5
MTV	3	1	3	3	8	18
NBC	0	1	2	0	0	3
PAX	0	0	1	0	0	1

TLC	0	0	0	4	5	9
UPN	1	2	0	1	0	4
VH1	0	0	1	0	2	3
WB	2	1	0	2	1	6
WE	0	0	0	0	1	1
	7	9	9	17	33	75

Appendix B

Survey Instrument

COM 1200 Extra Credit Survey

Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements about your relationships with other people.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

1. I find it relatively easy to get close to others.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

2. I find it difficult to trust others completely.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

3. When in a romantic relationship, I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

4. I am nervous when anyone gets too close to me.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

5. I am comfortable depending on other people and having them depend on me.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

6. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

7. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

8. When in a romantic relationship, I don't often worry about being abandoned.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

9. When in a romantic relationship, I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

10. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

11. I don't often worry about someone getting too close to me.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

12. When in a romantic relationship, I often worry that my partner won't want to stay with me.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

13. I am prepared to deceive someone completely if it was in my advantage to do so.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

14. I am prepared to do something bad to someone in order to get something I particularly wanted for myself.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

15. I often act in a cunning way in order to get what I want.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

16. I am prepared to "walk all over people" to get what I want.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

17. I enjoy manipulating people.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

18. I tend to do most things with an err in my own advantage.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

19. I agree that the most important thing in life is wining.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

20. I am prepared to be quite ruthless in order to get ahead in my job.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

21. I am prepared to be humble and honest rather than important and dishonest.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

22. I would like to be very powerful.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

******

Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements. Some of the items refer to a specific love relationship, while others refer to general attitudes and beliefs about love. Whenever possible, answer the questions with your current partner in mind. If you are not currently dating anyone, answer the questions with your most recent partner in mind. If you have never been in love, answer in terms of what you think your responses would most likely be.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

1. I have sometimes had to keep my partner from finding out about other lovers.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I feel that my partner and I were meant for each other.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I would rather suffer myself than let my partner suffer.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I cannot relax if I suspect that my partner is with someone else.

1 2 3 4 5

5. An important factor in choosing my partner was whether or not he/she would be a good parent.

1 2 3 4 5

6. Our love is the best kind because it grew out of a long friendship.

1 2 3 4 5

7. My partner and I have the right physical 'chemistry' between us.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I believe that what my partner doesn't know about me won't hurt him/her.

1 2 3 4 5

9. When my partner doesn't pay attention to me, I feel sick all over.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I cannot be happy unless I place my partner's happiness over my own.

1 2 3 4 5

11. A main consideration in choosing my partner was how he/she would reflect on my family.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

12. Our friendship merged gradually into love over time.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

13. My partner fits my ideal standards of physical beauty/handsomeness.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

14. My partner would get upset if he/she knew of some of the things I've done with other people.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

15. Our love relationship is the most satisfying because it developed from a good friendship.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

16. One consideration in choosing my partner was how he/she would reflect on my career.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

17. If my partner ignores me for a while, I sometimes do stupid things to try to get his/her attention back.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

18. I am physically willing to sacrifice my own wishes to let my partner achieve his/hers.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

******

1. Please estimate the total number of hours that you watched the following television program types this last week.

1. Comedies _____
2. Dramas_____
3. Soap operas_____
4. Talk shows _____
5. News programs_____
6. Game shows_____
7. Court TV shows_____
8. Reality shows_____
9. Movies on TV_____
10. Sports programs_____

2. If you were to go home and turn on the television tonight, which type of television show would you be most likely to watch? Please put in order, with 1 indicating most likely, and 10 least likely.

a. Comedies _____
b. Dramas_____
c. Soap operas_____
d. Talk shows _____
e. News programs_____
f. Game shows_____
g. Court TV shows_____
h. Reality shows_____
i. Movies on TV_____
j. Sports programs_____

3. Please indicate the number of TV programs, in each genre, that you consider yourself a regular viewer of.

a. Comedies _____
b. Dramas_____
c. Soap operas_____
d. Talk shows _____
e. News programs_____
f. Game shows_____
g. Court TV shows_____
k. Reality shows_____
l. Movies on TV_____
m. Sports programs_____

4. Please estimate the total number of hours you watched television:

Last week (Monday-Friday)_____

Last weekend (Saturday & Sunday)_____

Yesterday?_____

5. Please list your favorite three *reality* TV programs, with number one as your most favorite:

1._____

2._____

3._____

6. Please list your three favorite reality characters, with number one as your most favorite:

1. Character Name_____Show Name_____

How much do you like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

How much do you want to be like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

How much are you like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

2 Character Name_____Show Name_____

How much do you like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

How much do you want to be like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

How much are you like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

3 Character Name_____Show Name_____

How much do you like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

How much do you want to be like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

How much are you like this character?

__Very much so __A lot __Some __A little __Not at all

*****

Instructions: Please indicate how often you watch the following television shows:

Never **From time to time** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

	Never	From time to time	Sometimes	Often	Always
5th Wheel (WB)	1	2	3	4	5
Airline (A&E)	1	2	3	4	5
Amazing Race (CBS)	1	2	3	4	5
Ambush Makeover (UPN)	1	2	3	4	5
American Casino (Discovery)	1	2	3	4	5
American Idol (FOX)	1	2	3	4	5
Animal Cops (Animal Planet)	1	2	3	4	5
Animal Miracles (Animal Planet)	1	2	3	4	5
Baby Story (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Blind Date (UPN)	1	2	3	4	5
Boiling Points (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Caesars 24/7 (A&E)	1	2	3	4	5
Cheaters (WB)	1	2	3	4	5
Cold Turkey (PAX)	1	2	3	4	5
Cops (WB)	1	2	3	4	5
Cribs (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Damage Control (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Date my mom (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Dating Story (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Dog the Bounty Hunter (A&E)	1	2	3	4	5
Dream Job (ESPN)	1	2	3	4	5
Elimi-date (WB)	1	2	3	4	5
Extreme Makeover (ABC)	1	2	3	4	5
Extreme Makeover: Home Edition (ABC)	1	2	3	4	5
Family Plots (A&E)	1	2	3	4	5
Fear Factor (NBC)	1	2	3	4	5
Gastineau Girls (E!)	1	2	3	4	5
Growing up Gotti (A&E)	1	2	3	4	5
Home Delivery (WGN)	1	2	3	4	5
I Want a Famous Face (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
In a Fix (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Intervention (A&E)	1	2	3	4	5
Jackass (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Knievel's Wild Ride (A&E)	1	2	3	4	5
Made (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Makeover story (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Making the Band (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Motor mouth (VH1)	1	2	3	4	5

	Never	Time to time	Sometimes	Often	Always
My Super Sweet 16 (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Newlyweds (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Nanny 911 (FOX)	1	2	3	4	5
Next Top Model (UPN)	1	2	3	4	5
No Opportunity Wasted (Discovery)	1	2	3	4	5
Osbornes (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Perfect Proposal (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Pimp my Ride (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Project Greenlight (BRAVO)	1	2	3	4	5
PoweR Girls (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Punk'd (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Queer Eye for the Straight Girl (BRAVO)	1	2	3	4	5
Queer Eye For the Straight Guy (BRAVO)	1	2	3	4	5
Real World/Road Rules Challenge (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Road to Stardom (UPN)	1	2	3	4	5
Room Raiders (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Second Chance (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Showdog Moms and Dads (BRAVO)	1	2	3	4	5
Single in the City (WE)	1	2	3	4	5
Strange Love (VH1)	1	2	3	4	5
Starlet (WB)	1	2	3	4	5
Starting Over (FOX)	1	2	3	4	5
Super Nanny (ABC)	1	2	3	4	5
Surreal Life (VH1)	1	2	3	4	5
Survivor (CBS)	1	2	3	4	5
The Apprentice (NBC)	1	2	3	4	5
The Ashlee Simpson Show (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
The Bachelor (ABC)	1	2	3	4	5
The Contender (NBC)	1	2	3	4	5
The Real World (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
The Simple Life (FOX)	1	2	3	4	5
Trading Spaces (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Trading Spouses (FOX)	1	2	3	4	5
Wanna Come In? (MTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Wedding Story (TLC)	1	2	3	4	5
Wickedly Perfect (CBS)	1	2	3	4	5
Wife Swap (ABC)	1	2	3	4	5

*****

Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

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 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. Reality television presents things as they really are in life.
1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

7. If I see something on a reality television program, I can't be sure it really is that way.
1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

8. Reality television lets me see how other people live.
1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

9. Reality television programs do not show life as it really is.
1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

10. Reality television lets me see what happens in other places as if I were really there.
1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

*****

Instructions: Here are some reasons that people have given for why they watch reality television. Please circle the number to indicate whether the reason is exactly ***(5), a lot (4), somewhat (3), not much (2), or not at all (1)*** *like your own reason for watching television.*

I watch reality television…

	Agree				*Disagree*
1. Because it relaxes me.	5	4	3	2	1
2. So I won't have to be alone.	5	4	3	2	1
3. Just because it's there.	5	4	3	2	1
4. When I have nothing better to do.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Because it entertains me.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Because it is something to do with friends.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Because it helps me learn things about Others and myself.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Because it is stimulating.	5	4	3	2	1
9. So I can forget about school, work, or other things.	5	4	3	2	1
10. Because it allows me to unwind.	5	4	3	2	1
11. When there's no one else to talk to or be with.	5	4	3	2	1
12. Because I just like to watch.	5	4	3	2	1
13. Because it passes the time away, particularly when I'm bored.	5	4	3	2	1
14. Because it is enjoyable	5	4	3	2	1
15. So I can talk with other people about what's on.	5	4	3	2	1
16. So I can learn how to do things which I haven't done before.	5	4	3	2	1
17. Because it's exciting.	5	4	3	2	1

	Agree				*Disagree*
18. So I can get away from the rest of the family or others.	5	4	3	2	1
19. Because it is a good way to rest.	5	4	3	2	1
20. Because it makes me feel less lonely.	5	4	3	2	1
21. Because it's a habit, just something that I do.	5	4	3	2	1
22. Because it gives me something to do to occupy my time.	5	4	3	2	1
23. Because it amuses me.	5	4	3	2	1
24. So I can be with other members of the family or friends who are watching.	5	4	3	2	1
25. So I can learn about what could happen to me.	5	4	3	2	1
26. Because it cheers me up.	5	4	3	2	1
27. So I can get away from what I'm doing.	5	4	3	2	1

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Instructions: Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Please select only one answer per question, unless indicated. And remember that your answers are completely anonymous.

1. What is your year in school?
   _____Freshman
   _____Sophomore
   _____Junior
   _____Senior
   _____Graduate/Professional
   _____Other: please list_____

2. What is your age (in years)? _____

3. What is your sex?
   _____Male
   _____Female

4. What is your race (check as many as apply)?
   _____African-American
   _____American Indian
   _____Asian
   _____Caucasian
   _____Hispanic
   _____Other: please list_____

5. How would you classify your hometown?
   _____Urban
   _____Suburban
   _____Rural
   _____Other: please list_____

6. Does your mother have a college degree?
   _____Yes
   _____No
   _____Don't Know

7. Does your father have a college degree?
_____Yes
_____No
_____Don't Know

8. Are you currently in a romantic relationship?
_____Yes, a serious relationship
_____Yes, a dating relationship
_____No, not involved
_____Other: Please list_____

9. Please list the age of your first serious romantic relationship._____

10. Are you a feminist?
_____Yes
_____No
_____Don't know

11. Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up focus group interview?
_____Yes
_____No

If yes, please list provide your first name:_____
And telephone number:_____

Appendix C

Focus Group Interview Guide:

1. What reality TV shows are your favorites and why?
    A. What makes those shows "better" than others?
2. If you had to come up with a way to categorize reality TV, what genres do you see as exhibited in current reality TV programming?
3. Why would you choose to watch reality TV programming over other types of programs (for example: sitcoms, dramas, news programming)?
4. What kind of messages do you think that reality TV tells us about interpersonal relationships?
    A. Does this vary by show?
5. Do you talk about the reality TV shows that you watch with other people?
    A. Give some examples about the type of things you might say.
6. Do you ever use the internet to find out information about reality TV shows?
    A. What type of information might you access?
7. What do you see as the future for reality TV programming?
    A. Do you think you will still be watching reality TV ten years from now?
8. Is there anything else you would like to add about your thoughts about reality TV?

VITA

Kristin Cherry was born on June 18, 1977 in St. Louis, Missouri. She received her B.A. in 1999 from Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois where she majored in communication, with a minor in sociology. Then, she received her master's degree in sociology from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2001. Finally, she received her PhD in communication from the University of Missouri Columbia in 2008. She currently resides in Tucson, Arizona with her fiancé Brad Landolt and is working in an elementary school.