

SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND REALITY TELEVISION VIEWING  
AMONG EMERGING ADULTS

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Emerging Adulthood is a transitional stage that entails different developmental tasks. One specific task is developing sexual identity. Mass media (e.g., television, Internet, and movies) play an important role in influencing the emerging adults' development of their sexual beliefs and patterns of behavior. Among regularly scheduled programs on primetime television, the top four were reality television shows. This study investigated the relationship between emerging adults' sexual attitudes and reality television viewing. This quantitative research study included 91 participants from a southeastern university. Results revealed a positive relationship between sexual objectification between men and women and a negative relationship between sexual permissiveness and sexual objectification of women. A *t*-test for independent variables revealed females reported endorsing more permissive attitudes than males, females reported significantly higher approval of sexual objectification of men than males, males reported significantly higher approval of sexual objectification of women than females, and males indicated a higher adherence to sexual double standards than females. A chi-square for independence was performed and discovered sexual attitudes variables were correlated with three reality television sub-genres: Docusoaps, Gamedocs, and Exceptional Moments. A logistic regression found that Major, Race, and sexual attitudes with the exception of Sexual Permissiveness contributed to the

prediction of viewing Docusoaps. Major, Gender, and Sexual Objectification of Women contributed to the prediction of viewing Gamedocs. Gender, Race, Sexual Double Standards, and Sexual Objectification of Women were individual variables that contributed to the prediction of Exceptional Moments viewing.



SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND REALITY TELEVISION VIEWING  
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By

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Emerging adulthood (EA) encompasses ages 18-25 and is distinctly different from adolescence in that the individual leaves their family of origin and seeks independence from social roles and normative expectations (Arnett, 2003). Erickson posed that industrialized societies create an environment for identity exploration which often occurs in adolescence (Erickson, 1950, 1968). Arnett (2011) built on Erikson's work and described five features of EA a) identity explorations, b) instability c) self-focus, d) dissonance, and e) possibility. A fundamental developmental task in EA is to explore one's sexual identity (Arnett, 2000). EA is the developmental period that has the highest rate of participation in risky behaviors, such as unprotected sex, substance use, and unsafe driving. Emerging adults often experience conflict between personal choice, morality, societal shifts and overall health and well-being (Arnett, 2003; Arnett, 2011). Although emerging adults are taking steps towards protecting themselves, many still engage in unprotected sex with multiple partners which increases the likelihood of having unplanned pregnancies, abortions, and contracting sexual transmitted infections (Arnett, 2011).

Within human development, emerging adulthood has been viewed as a transitory period, where the parent's role in socialization diminishes and other socializing agents such as media, peers, school, and work become more significant (Arnett, 2000; Arnett, 2011). Mass media (e.g., television, Internet, and movies) play an important role in influencing the emerging adults' development of their sexual beliefs and patterns of behavior (Brown, 2002). Emerging adults in the current cohort are considered the first "new media" generation (Arnett, 2006). This is the first generation to have grown up with new media (e.g. Internet, podcast, social networks, and virtual

games). Despite the emergence of “new media,” television has remained the most utilized screen media format (Jolin & Weller, 2011). Recently television programming has become more influential in America as there are a variety of methods in accessing shows (e.g. Live, DVR, or Online). In 2011, the average time an American adult spent with TV and video equaled 4 hours and 34 minutes per day (eMarketer, 2011). Among regularly scheduled programs on primetime television in 2011-2012, the top four were reality television shows (TVbytheNumbers, 2012). Reality television is presented as authentic behavior and may be more likely to be a model or be modeled than less realistic programs. Often sex, stereotypical gender roles, and sexuality are presented in a favorable manner, focusing only on the positive aspects of sex rather than the problems and risks. As the fastest growing and most popular form of television programming today, reality shows have, however, received little scholarly attention. Thus, this study investigates the relationship between emerging adults’ sexual attitudes (i.e., sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification of men and women and, sexual double standards) and reality television viewing. Employing a uses and gratification approach with a social cognitive framework, the following study seeks to make a contribution to existing literature by examining and investigating the following research questions:

- Is there a relationship between emerging adults’ sexual double standard, sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification and television viewing? Also, are there gender differences among the sexual attitude variables?
- Do emerging adults’ sub-genre reality television choices differ by gender?
- What is the predictive value of emerging adults’ sexual double standards, sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification, and demographics, on reality television choice?

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

The following literature review will first cover current research on the dependent variables (i.e., television viewing and reality television viewing). There is a lack of research examining TV and Reality Television (RTV) viewing as the dependent variable; an examination of studies that investigate these as the independent variables will be reviewed. Next, literature on emerging adults' sexual attitudes will be examined. For the purpose of this study, sexual attitudes will refer to sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification, and sexual double standards.

### **Television Viewing**

Previous research has revealed a relationship between television viewing and sexual attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Collins, Elliot, Berry, Kanouse, Kunkel & Hunter, 2004; Ward & Friedman, 2006). Collins et al. 2004 conducted a longitudinal study to measure individual's TV viewing habits and sexual behavior. Using Nielsen ratings, researchers compiled a list of primetime programs and coded them for their sexual content. Using the list, participants selected TV programs which they viewed and the time spent each week viewing the program. In addition, participants were asked about behavior with someone of the opposite sex (e.g., intercourse, sex). Results revealed individuals who consumed heavy amounts of TV programs with sexual content were more likely to initiate sexual intercourse and advancement of non-coital sexual attitude activity the following year. On the other hand, participants who were exposed to TV programs that included risk of sex were less likely to be progressive in non-coital sexual behavior. The results suggest that consuming higher numbers of TV programs with high sexual content is associated with sexual behaviors; however, consumption of programs that included risk had the reverse effect.

Similarly, Ward (2002) investigated emerging adults' viewing habits and attitudes toward sexual relationships. Ward examined regular viewing habits and experimental exposure on emerging adults' conception of sexual relationships. First, participants were randomly assigned to view 1 of 3 sexual stereotypical clips: dating as a game, women as sexual objects, or men as sex-driven creatures. Following exposure to the clip, participants were asked to complete a survey accessing attitudes about sexual roles and relationships, assumptions about the sexual experiences of their peers, and regular viewing habits. Results indicated a positive relationship between frequency and sexual stereotypes. Among women, viewing sexual stereotypes was found to affect approval of those stereotypes. In this case, exposure to sexually stereotypical clips lead to acceptance of the sexual stereotype.

Kunkel, Eyal, Finnerty, Biely, and Donnerstein (2005) examined sexual messages (e.g. sexual activity, sexually suggestive behavior, or verbal references to sex) presented on television during 2004-2005. Television programs included comedies, soap operas, movies, and reality programs. Specifically, reality television programs included sexual content which equaled out to 3.4 scenes per hour containing sex. Conversely, all television programs were likely to show a risk or responsibility with the exception of reality programming (Kunkele t al., 2005). Reality television is a new genre of programming; therefore, it is important to examine its' role in the sexuality area.

### **Reality Television**

Reality television (RTV) refers to any program that follows an individual's life events. In 2011, five out of the top ten viewed programs by adults were RTV programs (Gorman, 2012). RTV programs include sexual content, sexual behavior, and verbal references to sexual behaviors (Farrar et al, 2003). The research in this area is limited; however, the genre itself has

evolved into distinct subgenres (Mead, 2006). For the purpose of the study, sub-genres include: a) dating programs, b) gamedocs, c) talent shows, d) makeover programs, e) docusoaps f) court programs, g) talk shows, h) celebrity living, i) exceptional moments and j) social experiment.

Reality dating programs (RDP) (e.g. *The Bachelor*, *The Bachelorette*) allow for viewers to share intimate and romantic experiences of the show contestants (Beck, Hellmueller, & Aeschbacher, 2012). A central theme of RDP is depicting adults in sexual situations to heighten the interest of the show (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2006). Zurbriggen and Morgan (2006) investigated television viewing, RDP viewing, and emerging adults' attitudes toward sex. Zurbriggen and Morgan surveyed 249 emerging adults and found the majority were occasional or frequent viewers of at least one RDP. Men reported utilizing RDP to learn more than women and reported higher scores for adversarial sexual beliefs and sexual double standard. For both genders, overall time of RDP viewing was positively correlated with adversarial sexual beliefs, endorsement of a sexual double standard, the beliefs that men are sex-driven, that appearance is important in dating, and that dating is a game. In this case, RDP viewing was associated with higher scores for sexual beliefs and sexual double standards.

Next, Gamedocs follows the daily lives of contestants in the context of a game show where contestants are rewarded for risk-taking behaviors (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2006). Murray (2004) considered Gamedocs (e.g., *Big Brother*, *Amazing Race*) the most popular reality television program. *Big Brother*, a Gamedoc, has recently completed their 14<sup>th</sup> season in 2012. *Big Brother* follows participants who live together, while competing for a grand prize. All interactions are captured on cameras until the show's finale. *America's Next Top Model* and *American Idol* are examples of talent shows that follow contestants' lives during the competition (Beck et al., 2012). *America's Next Top Model* is depicted as an authentic view in the process of



becoming a top American fashion model. Kaiser Family Foundation (2006) reported that often times the driving force behind talent show programs is the importance of being thin, sexy, and attractive.

Makeover reality programs (e.g., *Extreme Makeover*, *What Not to Wear*) profiles the transformation of participant's home, garden, attire, and body image during the show (Franco, 2008). Women are the primary target participants of many makeover reality television shows (Franco, 2008). *What Not to Wear* is an example of a makeover reality program where often women ages 18-27 are selected to participate. Participants are nominated by friends and family members and given tips of new dressing rules. Then, the participants are sent out to shop and later reveal their new image. The *Biggest Loser* is also another popular makeover show that profiles participants' weight loss journeys. There are seven men and women recruited and taken to California to live, eat, sleep and workout, until they are sent home to finish their weight loss.

Docusoaps (e.g., *Jersey Shore*, *The Real Housewives of...*) follow individuals in their natural environment (e.g., home and work) that focuses solely on their real-life issues. *The Real World* is considered one of the first Docusoaps and served as a platform to discuss HIV/AIDS when one of their participants revealed that they had contracted the virus (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2006). Viewers were exposed to a personal experience of an individual living with HIV/AIDS. Court programs broadcast the civil trials of actual cases and the judgment. *Judge Judy* is a popular court TV program which first aired in 1996 (CBS, 2013). Talk shows (e.g., *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *The View*) provide a platform and forum where the audience, host, and guest can participate in the discussion on social issues such as sexuality. Talk shows often times discuss the latest new sexuality topics sex addiction and sexual orientation. One of the top recognized worldwide talk show is *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. *The Oprah Winfrey Show* has

received a great amount of attention because of her exploration on issues such as relationship problems and gender-based violence.

Celebrity reality programs (e.g., *Keeping up with Kardashians*, *Run's House*) are reality programs that follow celebrities or high profile people placed in their own environment (Mead, 2006). *Keeping up with Kardashians* is an example of a celebrity RTV program as it profiles the lives of the Kardashian family that consists of sisters Kourtney, Kim, and Khole Kardashian. Emerging adults that identify with the celebrity, may model behaviors that he/she depicts on their show. Exceptional moments (e.g., *Tosh.0*, *America's Funniest Home Videos*) document extraordinary moments profiled within a real person's life. *Tosh.0* broadcasts video clips on a variety of topics such as celebrities, stereotypes and other parts of the popular culture. Social experiment RTV programs (e.g., *Wife Swap*, *Black and White*) constructs situations in which contestant would never otherwise experience. *Wife Swap* is a social experiment RTV program where families from different households swap lifestyles for a week.

### **Sexual Permissiveness**

Sexual permissiveness refers to an individual's favorable attitudes toward, or participation in any form of premarital sex. A few decades ago, premarital sex was strongly forbidden because of a negative stance against sex before marriage (Regnerus & Uecker, 2011). However, it has become more acceptable after the invention of the birth control pill and more opportunities to be sexually active before marriage. Emerging adults' are more likely than any other group to have two or more sexual partners in the past year (Arnett, 2006). "Hooking up", (i.e., involving sexual intercourse, but with no expectation of future commitment) is prevalent among college students and is becoming a norm attributed to sexual exploration during EA (Arnett, 2006).

Hendrick, Hendrick, and Reich (2006) conducted three studies to develop a briefer version of the Brief Attitudes Scale. The Brief Attitudes Scale is used to measure individual's attitudes towards sex. In the first study, the sample included 674 undergraduate students who were ages 18 to 22. The majority of the students were European Americans and reported being in a romantic relationship. Analyses were conducted to examine if the original scale could be compared to the newer version (e.g., internal reliability, and subscale inter-correlations). The results indicated gender differences in the sexual permissiveness scale. Men reported endorsing more permissive attitudes. Within the second study, the sample included 528 undergraduate students with similar demographics of the first study. Confirmatory analyses indicated that the new version yielded similar results to the original scale as women were less likely to endorse permissive attitudes. Hendricks et al. examined the new version along with three other measures to strengthen the construct validity of the measure. Again, women were found to be less endorsing of permissiveness. Additionally, Byno, Mullis, and Mullis (2009) examined emerging adult women's sexual behavior and attitudes. The sample included 364 university students and found that those who reported less sexual behavior also had less permissive attitudes.

There is a growing amount of research that shows a relationship between sexual content on TV and sexual permissiveness (Aubrey, Harrison, Kramer, & Yellin, 2003; Zhang, Miller, & Harrison, 2008; Eyal & Kunkel, 2008). Aubrey et al (2003) investigated whether the relationship between exposure to sexually oriented television and sexual expectations (i.e., expectations about a variety of sexual activities in a relationship and the timing of sexual activities in a relationship) differed by gender. Expectations about a variety of sexual activities in a relationship described 20 sexual activities that are expected to occur in a relationship. Expectation about timing of sexual acts in a relationship variable addressed 16 sexual acts and assessed when it would occur

in a relationship. For females, there was a negative relationship found between exposure to sexual television and expectation about timing of sexual acts in a relationship. For males, a positive relationship was found between exposure to sexually oriented television and an expectation of a broad range of sexual activities in relationship. Results suggest that television exposure contributes to sexual socialization of gender roles. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2008) found a positive relationship between exposure to sexual music videos and emerging adult's sexual attitudes (i.e., premarital sexual permissiveness and endorsement of the sexual double standard). Exposure to more sexually explicit music videos was associated with more permissive attitudes toward premarital sex regardless of gender.

Eyal and Kunkel (2008) investigated emerging adults' sexual television content exposure and their sexual attitudes and moral judgment. Eyal and Kunkel examined the context of shows that depicted consequences of sexual intercourse. Television exposure that portrayed negative consequences of sex leads to more negative attitudes toward premarital intercourse and negative attitudes were present 2 weeks after viewing. Beyond sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification has become a prevalent issue among young adults.

### **Sexual Objectification**

Sexual objectification refers to the regarding of an individual as a sexual object and their sexual attributes and physical attractiveness is detached from the rest of their identity (American Psychological Association, 2007). American Psychological Association (2007) revealed that women, more often than, men are depicted in sexualizing and objectified manners. Ward and Friedman (2006) investigated individual's viewing habits, sexual attitudes, and behaviors. Ward and Friedman examined prominent sexual themes in a variety of TV programming such as music videos, talk shows, primetime comedies, and dramas. Participants were presented to 1 of 3

stereotypical clips: neutral, sex as recreation, and men as sex driven. Researchers reported viewing approximately 10 hours of sexy primetime shows, 40 hours viewing music videos, and 5 hours watching talk shows per month. Increased viewing of sexy prime time shows was positively correlated with stronger support of sex as a recreation. Talk show viewing had a positive relationship with greater endorsement of stereotypical gender roles. In this case, specific types of programming (i.e., music videos and talk shows) were associated with sexual attitudes. After being exposed to a clip depicting women as sexual objects, participants indicated a stronger support for the notion (Ward & Friedman, 2006).

Similarly, Kistler and Lee (2010) explored the short-term effects of exposure to hip-hop music videos on emerging adults' acceptance of the objectification of women, sexual permissiveness, gender attitudes, and rape myth acceptance. Participants were presented a set of 5 music videos of either high or low sexual content. Male participants who were exposed to hip-hop music videos with high sexual content reported greater objectification of women, sexual permissiveness, stereotypical gender attitudes, and acceptance of rape. For females, there was no relationship found when examining their attitudes on objectification of women, sexual permissiveness, gender attitudes, and rape myth acceptance.

Grabe, Ward, and Hyde, (2008) found that sexual objectification of men in electronic and print media affects body image concerns for men that are comparable to that of women. Although men are not objectified to the extent that women are, the objectification that is internalized by men appears to detrimentally affect their health in similar ways (Moradi & Huang, 2008). Particularly, there is growing attention on sexual objectification among gay and bisexual men considering the greater emphasis on physical characteristics among homosexual than heterosexual men (Kozak, Frankenhauser, & Roberts, 2009). Kozak et al. (2009) examined

male sexual orientation and the objectification of self and others. Their sample included 29 heterosexual and 30 homosexuals. When examining heterosexual men, women were more objectified, whereas homosexual men objectified themselves and other men more.

### **Sexual Double Standards**

Sexual double standard refers to how males and females are viewed differently when it is related to sexual behaviors (Crawford & Popp, 2003). Men are considered to have more sexual freedom, while women encounter more negative ramifications for the same behavior (Lyons, Giordano, Manning, & Longmore, 2011). Ward (2002) investigated the effects of both regular viewing habits and experimental exposure on students' conceptions about sexual relationships. Ward found the more viewing hours of music videos for men were associated with endorsement of each of the gender sexual stereotypes. Frequency of viewing of music videos predicted stronger endorsement of traditional gender role norms and of dating as a game/sport. Among women, frequency predicted endorsing more traditional attitudes about gender roles, viewing dating as a recreational sport, and presuming greater sexual experience of their male peers.

Similarly, Milhausen and Herold (2002) investigated the prevalence of sexual double standards in 413 undergraduate students. Prevalence of sexual double standard was found more among women than men. Results indicated that male participants endorsed traditional sexual double standards, while women endorsed a reverse sexual double standard. Similarly, in this study, while both men and women endorsed an explicit traditional sexual double standard, men endorsed a stronger explicit traditional double standard than women. Sakaluk and Milhausen (2012) examined factors that influence double standards and the relationship between levels of social desirability. Results indicated that both genders held explicit traditional double standards. However, gender differences were found when examining explicit sexual double standard

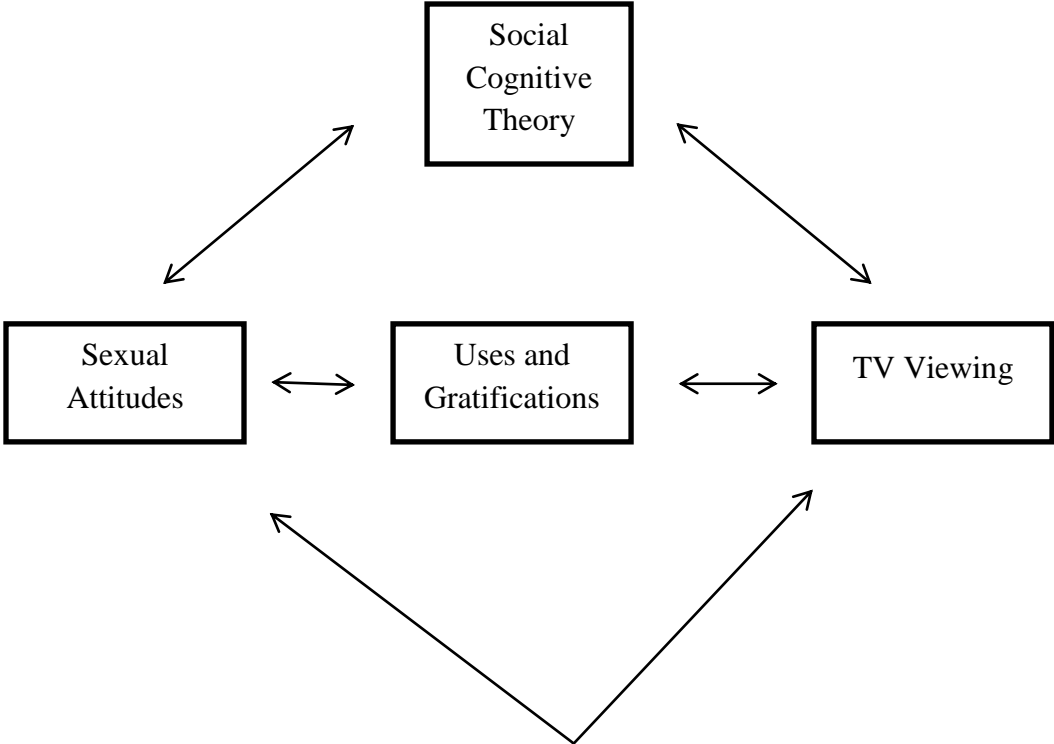
endorsement. For males, double standards were found to be more traditional and endorsed stronger explicit double standards. On the other hand, females endorsed more implicit double standards.

### **Theoretical Framework**

An integration of social cognitive theory and uses and gratification paradigm will be used to provide a framework for the current study. Social cognitive theory will be used to explain the relationship between emerging adults' attitudes and RTV viewing. The uses and gratifications paradigm will be used to explain how emerging adults may choose to use RTV to gratify their needs (see Figure 1). There is growing evidence that television is a prime source of information about sex and a critical agent in human socialization on matters related to sexuality (Brown, L'Engle, Pardun, Guo, Kenneavy, & Jackson, 2006). Socialization refers to the process in which skills are obtained necessary to function within a social group (Grusec, 2002). Bandura's (1971) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) helps understand how viewing RTV programs and the relationship between sexual attitudes may impact socialization.

Human behavior is often explained by unidirectional causation in that behavior is shaped and controlled by internal disposition or environmental influences. However, Bandura's (1986) triadic reciprocal model which includes a transactional view of self and society in that personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants influence each other bi-directionally. Here, human behavior in a triadic reciprocal relationship (i.e., personal, behavioral, and environmental) is used to explain psychosocial functioning. Personal factors consist of an individual's ability to perform a behavior (i.e., cognitive, affective, and biological events). Behavioral factors included skills to perform a behavior (e.g., practice, and self-efficacy). Environmental factors refer to factors that affect an individual's behavior.

**Figure 1. Theoretical Framework**





According to Bandura's modeling process (1971), there are four stages of modeling: attention, cognitive ability, ability to reproduce the behavior, and motivation. First, individuals cannot learn unless they pay attention to what they are viewing on television. Only behaviors that capture individual attention will be modeled. Second, cognitive ability refers to retention and subsequent likelihood of learning the information or modeling a related behavior. Third, individuals must have the ability to reproduce the behavior. Last, individuals must be motivated to replicate the behavior.

To gain a greater sense of why emerging adults choose specific subgenres, the Uses and Gratification paradigm will also be employed. Uses and gratifications posit that individuals make deliberate choices when selecting television programs to watch (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). There are five assumptions of uses and gratifications (Katz et al., 1974): a) viewers are active when selecting what they watch b) the linkage to gratification and medium choice is done by the viewer, c) there are multiple TV shows that compete for viewer's need, d) viewers have enough self-awareness of their media use to be able to provide researchers with information on that use, and e) the value of TV show content can be assessed by the user. Katz et al. (1974) identified four uses and gratifications of media: information, identification, integration and social interaction, and diversion.

The information need refers to the idea that people select media to acquire and understand information (Katz et al., 1974). This need is particularly important as social cognitive theory seeks to explain how an individual acquires new behavior through observation. Examples include learning from relevant events and conditions in the world, seeking advice on practical matters, and gaining information on particular topics. The identification need refers to selecting media that allows us to reaffirm the identity and models of behavior, while gaining insight into

one's self. In addition, social cognitive theory states that individuals have to become motivated to reproduce the behavior (Bandura, 1971). For emerging adults, identity has been associated with the driving force behind media choice (Brown, 1999). Similarly, Ebersole and Woods (2007) found that personal identification is one of the five factors that explained personal choice preference for RTV. A unique feature of emerging adulthood is the opportunity for identity exploration in the areas of love, work, and worldviews.

Integration and social interaction refers to gaining insight into the circumstances of others, identifying with others while gaining a sense of belonging, and enabling one to stay connected with family, friends, and society (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). For emerging adults, this is a time of instability and a time where they have fewer family and peer interactions (Arnett, 2006). RTV can be used to gratify their need for companionship or to form new relationships with others. Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) found that one of the top motives for watching RTV programs were to provide social interaction (e.g., watching with family and friends, something to do when friends come over, conversation starter for social interactions).

Lastly, the diversion refers to diverting from problems, relaxing, getting intrinsic cultural or aesthetic enjoyment, emotional release, and sexual arousal (Katz et al., 1974). EA have the largest amount of leisure time with the exception of the elderly and may spend this leisure time watching TV (Larson, 1990). Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) conducted a study on emerging adults to investigate salient motives for watching reality television. Papacharissi and Mendelson found habitually passing time and relaxation were top motives in watching RTV programs. In this study, most popular motive was fulfilling their diversion need. Given the multiple developmental tasks of EA, individuals may use reality television to escape and relax from their

unstable environment. Integrating these approaches provides a contextual framework to examine the relationship between sexual attitudes and RTV.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHOD**

### **Purpose**

There were several goals of the current study. Given the developmental period of the participants, the first goal was to assess sexual attitudes and their relationship with RTV subgenres. Also, the study aimed to examine if there were gender differences among emerging adult's selection of specific sub-genres of reality television. Lastly, the study explored the predictive value of emerging adults' sexual attitudes, and demographics on reality television choice.

### **Sampling**

The research study was submitted to the university IRB Board for approval (see Appendix A). After receiving approval from the university, a pilot study was conducted to test the logistics and gather feedback prior to the larger study. Feedback was obtained and appropriate adjustments were made to the survey. Data collected during the pilot were included in the data analysis. Pilot data were used in the analyses as participants fit the inclusion age range. The larger sample included a convenience sample of undergraduate students (ages 18 - 26) enrolled in a large southeastern university. Potential participants were recruited from a variety of university courses in Child Development and Family Relations, Communication, Recreation and Leisure Studies, and Criminal Justice. Students were contacted through email by instructors or informed through a class visit by the primary researcher. Instructors provided students with an email invitation which included a link to the online survey. The email invitation brought students to the informed consent page. After giving consent, the participants were directed to the survey. The data collection period took place between January 21th, 2013 and February 25th, 2013.

## Measures

**Sexual permissiveness.** The Brief Sexual Attitudes Scale (BSAS) was designed to measure the respondent's attitudes towards sex ( $\alpha .93$ ). The scales composed of four subscales: Permissiveness, Birth Control, Communion, and Instrumentality. For the purpose of this study, the BSAS permissiveness subscale was used to measure emerging adult's attitudes toward permissiveness. Participants used on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree) to indicate their agreement with four statements. Participant's responses were added together for a total sexual permissiveness score. A high sexual permissiveness score illustrated a more permissive attitude (see Appendix D).

**Sexual objectification.** Sexual objectification of men and women were measured using an eight-item modified objectification scale ( $\alpha .88$ ) (Kalyanaraman, Steele, & Sundar, 2000). A modified version found in Kistler and Lee (2010) was used to assess participants' acceptance of objectification of women/men and their specific approval of objectifying women/men. The creator of the original scale was contacted for measure use. However, the modified version was used because the original measure could not be obtained. Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) to indicate their agreement with four statements. Responses from each individual measure were added together and participants received a total score for both the sexual objectification of men and women. A high total score indicates more approval of objectification (see Appendix E).

**Sexual double standards.** Sexual double standards were measured using the Sexual Double Standard Measure (SDSS) ( $\alpha .73$ ) (Muehlenhard & Quackenbush, 2011). The measure consisted of 26 items. Six items compared women's and men's sexual behavior on the same item. The additional 20 items occur in pairs with parallel items for women's and men's sexual

behavior. Participants responded to each statement on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 4 = *agree strongly*). An equation was used to calculate each individual's sexual double standard scores. A high sexual double standard score indicates greater adherence to sexual double standards (see Appendix F).

**Television viewing.** Two dimensions of television use were assessed: overall weekly viewing and the amount of time spent watching a particular RTV sub-genre. To measure viewing amounts, participants were asked to provide their total amount of time per week spent watching television. Next, participants were asked to select from a compiled list of RTV sub-genres developed by Mead (2006) and indicated the average number of hours spent watching each subgenre. The eleven RTV sub-genres developed by Mead (2006) and used in this study are listed below:

**Gamedocs** (e.g., *Survivor*, *Big Brother*): follows the day-in-the-life happenings of the stars, wrapped in a game show text, where stars are eliminated regularly, until a grand prize is rewarded in the finale.

**Dating programs** (e.g., *Bachelor/ Bachelorette*): profiles the events of individuals competing to date someone.

**Talent shows** (e.g. *American Idol*, *The Voice*): documents talents of non-celebrities looking to achieve stardom.

**Makeover/lifestyle programs** (e.g., *Extreme Makeover*, *What Not to Wear*): follows step-by-step happenings that reveal the rags to riches change in one's current lifestyle.

**Docusoaps** (e.g., *The Real Housewives of...*, *Jersey Shore*): follows the day-in-the-life happenings of non-celebrities ; no prizes awarded, focuses solely on their real-life issues.

**Court TV** (e.g., *Judge Judy*, *Judge Mathis*): broadcasts the civil trials of people's actual cases.

**Talk shows** (e.g., *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *The View*): broadcast audience participation combined with one-on-one interviews between host and guest.

**Celebrity living** (e.g., *Keeping up with Kardashians*, *Married to Jonas*): follows the daily lives of celebrities.

**Game shows** (e.g., *Family Feud*, *The Price is Right*): structured time limit programs that focus on ordinary people competing in challenges for a prize.

**Exceptional moments** (e.g., *Tosh.0*, *America's Funniest Home Videos*): profiles extraordinary moments within a real person's life.

**Social experiment** (e.g., *Wife Swap*, *Black and White*): constructs situations that contestants would never otherwise experience.

**Demographics.** A brief demographic questionnaire was used to capture participant's age, ethnicity, gender, relationship status, and sexual orientation. There were a number of variables recoded (e.g. relationship status and major) (see Appendix C).

**Age.** Participants were asked to enter their current age. Only those that met the inclusion criteria was used in the data analysis

**Gender.** Participants were asked to indicate whether they were male or female.

**Academic Rank and Major.** Participants were asked to indicate their academic rank (i.e. Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, or Graduate Student).

Additionally, participants were asked provide their current major.

**Race/ethnicity.** Participants were asked to identify their race and/or ethnicity by selecting options from the following list: American Indian / Native American, Asian, Black (Non-Hispanic), White (Non-Hispanic), Hispanic / Latino Pacific Islander, Two or More Races, or Other.

**Relationship status.** Participants were asked to identify their relationship status by selecting an option from the following list: Single (not dating or in a relationship), Casually dating, Exclusively dating (Monogamous), Engaged, Cohabiting, Married, and Divorced, Separated, or Widowed.

**Sexual orientation.** Participants were asked to identify their sexual orientation by selecting heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

Surveys were administrated through Qualtrics, a web-based survey software for university faculty, staff and students. After the survey was closed, data were downloaded into an SPSS file and cleaned. The inclusion criterion was expanded to include participants to age 26. However, it is important to note that this age range encompasses emerging adults. Arnett (2006) mentioned that there is ambiguous literature on defining the age range of emerging adulthood. Also, the data collection time period was extended to gain more male participants in Criminal Justices courses. Increasing the age for inclusion helped to reach the target sample of 83 for a



medium effect which is how many participants to include the research study to reach a correct decision and to reduce error in the estimates of parameters of interest (Cohen, 1988).

Relationship status was collapsed into two variables: “1” single or “2” in a relationship which included those casually dating, exclusively dating, engaged, cohabiting and married.

Additionally, majors were recoded as “1” CDFR or “2” Non-CDFR to examine any differences among majors.

### **Data Analysis**

A Pearson Correlation was conducted to a measure of the strength of the relationship between the independent variables (i.e., sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification of men and women, and sexual double standards). Next, a *t*-test of independent sample was conducted to examine the gender differences among the independent variables. Spearman’s Correlation was used to investigate the strength of the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables (i.e. TV viewing and RTV viewing). To find if RTV viewing varied by gender, a chi-square was performed. Last, a logistic regression was conducted to examine the relationship between RTV viewing and the demographic variables and independent variables.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Sample

A descriptive analysis was performed to capture the mean age, race/ethnicity, relationship status, sexual orientation, and academic rank of the sample (see Table 1). The sample consisted of 91 participants with a mean age of 20 years ( $SD = 1.79$ , range = 18–26). The majority of the sample included White participants; however, there were a variety of academic majors (e.g., Child Development and Family Relations, Communication, Criminal Justices, Recreational Therapy, and Nursing). The sample included 68 females and 22 males. In regards to relationship status, a majority reported they were exclusively dating followed by single. Only one participant reported bisexual as their sexual orientation, the remaining 90 reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual.

### Research Question 1

The first goal of the current study was to investigate whether there was a relationship between emerging adults' sexual double standard, sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification and television viewing. A Pearson correlation analysis was performed and two significant relationships were revealed. First, a positive relationship was found between sexual objectification of women and the sexual objectification of men ( $r = .541$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Second, a negative relationship was found between sexual permissiveness and the sexual objectification of women ( $r = -.579$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (see Table 2).

A  $t$ -test for independent variables was conducted to examine the relationship between gender and sexual attitudes (i.e., sexual double standards, sexual permissiveness, and sexual objectification). Inspection of Q-Q Plots revealed that sexual permissiveness was normally

Table 1.

*Demographics of the Sample*

Characteristic	Participants (n= 91)
<b>Academic rank</b>	
Freshman	9
Sophomore	15
Junior	25
Senior	28
Graduate Student	14
<b>Academic Major</b>	
CDFR	24
Non-CDFR	66
Missing	1
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	68
Male	22
<b>Race</b>	
American Indian / Native American	1
Black (Non-Hispanic)	17
White (Non-Hispanic)	66
Latino/Hispanic	1
Two or more races	5
Other	1
<b>Relationship Status</b>	
Single	30
Casually dating	13
Exclusively dating	39
Engaged	3
Cohabiting	3
Married	3
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	
Bisexual	1
Heterosexual	90
Homosexual	0

Table 2.  
*Correlations of Independent Variables*

Measure	1	2	3	4
1. Sexual Double Standard	-	-	-	-
2. Sexual Objectification of Men	-.087	-	-	-
3. Sexual Objectification of Women	.130	.541**	-	-
4. Sexual Permissiveness	-.155	-.241*	-.579**	-

Note. \*\*  $p < 0.01$  level, \* $p < .05$

distributed for both genders and that there was homogeneity of variance as assessed by Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. Therefore, an independent *t*-test was run on the data with 96% intervals (CI) for the mean difference. Findings indicated gender differences among all variables. For sexual permissiveness, Females ( $M = 3.83, SD = .82$ ) reported endorsing more permissive attitudes than Males ( $M = 2.83, SD = .96$ ),  $t(87) = -4.67, p < .01$ . Next, Females ( $M = 30.37, SD = 9.89$ ) reported significantly higher approval of sexual objectification of men than Males ( $M = 25.06, SD = 10.42$ ),  $t(84) = -2.00, p < .05$ . On the other hand, Males ( $M = 35.05, SD = 9.24$ ) reported significantly higher approval of sexual objectification of women than Females ( $M = 25.54, SD = 9.94$ ),  $t(88) = 3.96, p < .01$ . Last, Males ( $M = 7.82, SD = 3.78$ ) indicated a higher adherence to sexual double standards than females ( $M = 4.43, SD = 2.69$ ),  $t(76) = 3.47, p < .01$ .

A Spearman rank-order correlation was performed in order to investigate the relationship among the sexual attitude variables and RTV viewing (see Table 3). Sexual double standards was found to have a positive relationship with Exceptional Moments ( $r = .367, p < .01$ ). Sexual permissiveness was found to have a negative relationship with GameDocs ( $r = -.238, p < .05$ ) and Exceptional Moments ( $r = -.241, p < .05$ ). In regards to sexual objectification of men, a positive relationship with Docusoaps ( $r = .258, p < .05$ ) was revealed. Lastly, sexual objectification of women was discovered to have a positive relationship with Exceptional Moments ( $r = .214, p < .01$ ).

When examining the different correlations in regards to subgenres, all were found to be statistically significant with at least one other RTV subgenre. Overall television viewing was positively correlated with Reality Dating Programs ( $r = .237, p < .05$ ), Makeover/Lifestyle ( $r = .207, p < .05$ ), Celebrity Living ( $r = .370, p < .01$ ), and Social Experiment ( $r = .244, p < .05$ ).

Table 3  
Correlations of Independent and Dependent Variables

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Sexual Double Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Permissiveness	-.155	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Sexual Objectification of Men	-.087	-.241*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Sexual Objectification of Women	.130	-.579**	.541**	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Average weekly television viewing	.019	-.029	.267*	.126	-	-	-	-	-
6. Game docs	.008	-.238*	-.095	.015	.128	-	-	-	-
7. Talent shows	.071	.119	.103	-.109	-.004	.256*	-	-	-
8. Dating programs	-.086	.015	.083	-.166	.237*	.234*	.244*	-	-
9. Makeover/lifestyle programs	-.159	.038	.120	-.151	.207*	.219*	.072	.363**	-
10. Docusoaps	-.079	-.027	.258*	.111	.180	.272**	.283**	.331**	.338**
11. Court TV	-.079	-.205	.199	.155	.040	.359**	.133	.352**	.250*
12. Talk shows	-.169	.075	-.063	-.125	.125	.334**	.223*	.396**	.426**
13. Celebrity living	-.044	.075	.177	-.003	.370**	.247*	.358**	.475**	.387**
14. Exceptional moments	.367**	-.241*	.013	.214*	.049	.174	.029	.046	.009
15. Game shows	-.002	-.052	.007	.004	.172	.374**	.206	.107	.299**
16. Social experiment	.053	.116	-.002	-.100	.244*	.157	.064	.276**	.488**

Note. \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05.

The RTV subgenre Gamedocs was found to be positively correlated with all except for Social Experiment and Exceptional Moments. Talent shows was found to be positively correlated with Dating Programs ( $r = .244, p < .05$ ), Docusoaps ( $r = .283, p < .01$ ), Celebrity Living ( $r = .358, p < .01$ ), and Talk shows ( $r = .223, p < .05$ ). Next, the subgenre dating programs was correlated with all subgenres, but Exceptional Moments and Game Shows. Makeover/Lifestyle was found to statistically significant with all, excluding Talent Shows and Exceptional Moments. The RTV subgenres Docusoaps, Court TV, Talk Shows and Celebrity Living were correlated with all other subgenres with the exception of Game shows. Exceptional Moments was only correlated with Game Shows ( $r = .261, p < .05$ ) revealing a positive correlation. Game Show was correlated with all except for the RTV subgenres Talents Shows.

### **Research Question 2**

In order to investigate the gender variance among reality show subgenres, a chi-square was performed. A chi-square for independence was performed and revealed that sexual attitudes variables were correlated with GameDocs, Exceptional Moments, and Docusoaps. For GameDocs, The sample consisted of 14 participants who reported viewing GameDocs, 5 Males and 9 Females. These differences were not statistically significant,  $X^2(1, N=89) = 1.35, p=.245$ . Next, thirty-seven participants reported viewing Docusoaps, 5 Males and 32 females. These differences were statistically significant  $X^2(1, N=89) = 3.57, p=.05$ . Last, Exceptional Moments were viewed by 52 participants, 19 Males and 33 Females. These differences were statistically significant  $X^2(1, N=89) = 11.62, p=.00$ .

### Research Question 3

To find the predictive value of emerging adults' sexual permissiveness, objectification of men and women, attitudes toward sexuality, and demographics in regards to reality choice, a logistical regression analysis was performed. Only three RTV subgenres were found significant in the chi-square analysis, for that reason DocuSoaps, GameDocs, and Exceptional Moments were used for logistic regression. The analysis was conducted to predict the viewing of subgenres participant's demographics and sexual attitudes as predictors. Effectiveness of the logistic model was demonstrated through significance tests of the model against the null model, the significance test of each predictor, goodness of fit indices, and predicted possibilities (Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll, 2002).

A test of the full model against a constant only model was proven not to be statistically significant, indicating that independent variables did not contribute to prediction on whether emerging adults would view Docusoaps ( $X = 10.63$ ,  $p = .224$  with  $df=8$ ). Nagelkerke's  $R^2$  of .210 indicated a weak relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 60 % (not viewing 63.4% and viewing 55.9%). In terms of individual variables, the Wald criterion demonstrated that Major, Race, and all of the sexual attitude variables with the exception of Sexual Permissiveness contributed to the prediction. The odds of a CDFR major watching Docusoaps were 1.34 ( $=e^{-.095}$ ; see Table 4) times greater than the odds for a non-CDFR major. Additionally, the odds of a White participant watching Docusoaps were 1.19( $=e^{.171}$  see Table 4) times greater than the odds for a non-White participant.

Similarly, the model was not statically significant in predicting the viewing of GameDocs ( $X = 12.34$ ,  $p = .135$  with  $df=8$ ). The Nagelkerke's  $R^2$  was .260 indicating a weak relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 84% (not viewing 95.2% and



Table 4.

*Logistic Regression Predicting Docsoaps Viewing*

Predictors	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I.for	
							EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Age	-.095	.171	.306	1	.580	.909	.650	1.273
Major	.310	.614	.254	1	.614	1.363	.409	4.544
Gender	-2.247	1.060	4.497	1	.034	.106	.013	.843
Race	.171	.577	.088	1	.766	1.187	.383	3.678
SexDblStd	.055	.092	.361	1	.548	1.057	.883	1.265
SexObjMen	-.026	.034	.554	1	.457	.975	.911	1.043
SexObjWome n	.086	.046	3.468	1	.063	1.090	.995	1.193
Permissivenes s	.237	.374	.401	1	.527	1.267	.609	2.639
Constant	-.864	4.609	.035	1	.851	.422		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: SexDblStandard, SexualObjMen, SexualObjWomen, and Permissiveness.

odds for a CDFR major. Next, the odds of a female participants watching Docusoaps were 1.06( $=e^{.062}$ ; see Table 5) times greater than the odds for male participants.

Last, Exceptional Moments ( $X = 21.59$ ,  $p = .01$  with  $df = 8$ ) model was statistically significant in predicting the likelihood of emerging adults viewing. Nagelkerke's  $R^2$  of .337 indicated a weak relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 73.3% (not viewing 64.5% and viewing 79.5%). The Wald criterion demonstrated that Gender, Race, Sexual Double Standards, and Sexual Objectification of Women were individual variables that contributed to the prediction of Exceptional Moments viewing. The odds of a female participant viewing Exceptional Moments are 2.57( $=e^{.943}$ ; see Table 6) times greater than the odds for male participants. Next, the odds of a non- White participants viewing Exceptional Moments 2.17 ( $=e^{.775}$ ; see Table 6) times greater than the odds of White participants.

Table 5.

*Logistic Regression Predicting GameDocs Viewing*

Predictors	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for	
							EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Age	-.320	.227	1.989	1	.158	.726	.465	1.133
Major	1.512	.822	3.379	1	.066	4.534	.905	22.725
Gender	.062	1.442	.002	1	.966	1.064	.063	17.970
Race	-.148	.871	.029	1	.865	.863	.157	4.754
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>								
SexDblStd	-.121	.140	.757	1	.384	.886	.674	1.164
SexObjMen	-.078	.046	2.853	1	.091	.925	.844	1.013
SexObjWomen	.006	.063	.010	1	.919	1.006	.890	1.138
Permissiveness	-.901	.570	2.495	1	.114	.406	.133	1.242
Constant	10.377	6.368	2.655	1	.103	32097.53		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: SexDblStandard, SexualObjMen, SexualObjWomen, and Permissiveness.

Table 6.

*Logistic Regression Predicting Exceptional Moments Viewing*

Predictors	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for	
							EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Age	-.022	.192	.013	1	.910	.979	.672	1.425
Major	-1.100	.656	2.813	1	.094	.333	.092	1.204
Gender	.943	1.314	.515	1	.473	2.567	.196	33.693
Race	.775	.665	1.359	1	.244	2.170	.590	7.982
Step 1 <sup>a</sup> SexDblStd	.303	.130	5.414	1	.020	1.354	1.049	1.747
SexualObjMen	-.026	.046	.334	1	.563	.974	.891	1.065
SexObjWomen	.021	.053	.157	1	.692	1.021	.921	1.132
Permissiveness	-.441	.417	1.119	1	.290	.643	.284	1.457
Constant	.895	5.135	.030	1	.862	2.447		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: SexDblStandard, SexualObjMen, SexualObjWomen, and Permissiveness.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the relationship between emerging adults' sexual attitudes and their reality television viewing. First, when examining emerging adults' sexual attitudes two relationships were revealed. Results indicated a positive relationship between sexual objectification of women and men and a negative relationship between sexual objectification of women and sexual permissiveness. It is possible that emerging adults who do not endorse these attitudes tend to view subgenres that depict conservative viewpoints on sexuality. This coincides with the identification need of uses and gratification which posits that viewers select media that allows us to reaffirm the identity and models of behavior, while gaining insight into one's self. It is also important that this study adds a unique finding as there is limited research on emerging adults' attitudes toward the sexual objectification of men. Here, it was found that if emerging adults approved of the objectification of one sex than they approved of the objectification of opposite as well.

Impulsivity Gender differences were found among all of the independent variables (i.e., sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification, and sexual double standards). Hendrick, Hendrick, and Reich (2006) found gender difference among sexual permissiveness. In their study, women were less endorsing of permissiveness than men (Hendrick et al., 2006). However, within the current study females reported endorsing of permissiveness more than men. This finding does not support previous literature on sexual permissiveness. This may be attributed to the greater number of female than male participants in the current study. Also, as premarital sex is becoming more acceptable these attitudes may reflect in women attitudes as well. With regards to sexual objectification, the current study provides a new perspective as it captures both genders' attitude on the objectification of both sexes. Men approved of the sexual objectification of women more

than they approved of the sexual objectification of men. Previous research (e.g., Kozak, Frankenhauser, & Roberts, 2009) has found that heterosexual men objectified women more, while homosexual men objectified men more. The influence of sexual orientation was unable to be examined because of lack of sufficient data. Research on the sexual objectification may become a larger focus as men are presented more sexualized manner the media (Grabe, Ward, & Hyde, 2008). Women reported higher objectification of men than the sexual objectification of women. Emerging adults are developing their sexual identity and as they are exposed to content that support this notion, they may tend to endorse it toward the other sex. Also, there is a growing trend of men's physiques in various media being used as sexual objects. As a consequence, women may be approving of the objectification of men.

Males reported higher adherence to sexual double standards than females. Milhausen and Herold (2002) found a similar result; male participants endorsed a traditional sexual double standard which supports the notion of greater acceptance of men having more sexual partners than women. Women were found to endorse reverse double standards which can be interpreted as women having more egalitarian attitudes on sexual double standards. This is opposite from Sakaluk and Milhausen (2012) who found both women and men both endorsed explicit sexual double standards. According to Bandura (1971), gender differences may be attributed to the traditional gender models that are reinforced and punished through socialization processes. For example, traditional gender roles are embedded in different socializing agent (media, family, institutions) theses may reinforce sexual double standards for men.

Within the survey, participants were given category labels of RTV subgenres along with an example RTV program that exemplified shows of the subgenre. As a consequence of limited research defining RTV subgenres, participants may not have been aware of which category the

show they viewed belonged. Despite this limitation, there were four relationships identified. With regard to sexual double standards and sexual objectification of women, both were found to have a positive relationship with the RTV subgenre Exceptional Moments. The subgenre Exceptional Moments include shows such as *The Soup*, *America's Funniest Videos* and *Tosh.0*, that documents extraordinary moments within a real person's life. Minority women who adhere to Sexual Double Standards and who approved of the Sexual Objectification of Women were more likely to view Exceptional Moments. Gender differences were discovered with the majority of the males in the sample indicated viewing Exceptional Moments. In this case, there were significantly more females in the study which may have skewed the results for this subgenre. Although there has been no research that examined the sexual content on Exceptional Moments, the content on these programs may reinforce similar attitudes that were found to be predictors to viewing these programs. For instance, Zurbriggen and Morgan (2006) found that males used reality dating programs for information and the more hours viewed was positively correlated to adversarial sexual beliefs, endorsement of a sexual double standard, and the beliefs that men are sex-driven. Additionally, women who spent more hours viewing music videos had a stronger endorsement of females viewed as sexual objects (Ward, 2002; Ward & Friedman, 2006). In addition, Kistler and Lee (2010) found that male participants who were exposed to hip-hop music videos that were high in sexual content reported greater objectification of women. Similarly, Exceptional moments also use video clips that may use clips with sexual content. In this case, it may yield similar results for male emerging adults.

From a SCT perspective, individuals who view these subgenres may reinforce the attitudes that are being depicted in the subgenre. For instance, individuals who were found to endorse sexual double standards were more likely to view shows like *Tosh.0* (Exceptional

Moments) that broadcast stereotypical video clips. Additionally, uses and gratification posits that individuals view shows to fulfill a specific gratification (i.e., information, identification, integration and social interaction, or diversion). Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) reported that one of the top motives for viewing RTV programs was to reaffirm their identity or model of behavior. Individuals may seek subgenres to reaffirm their identities through viewing programs that coincide with their beliefs and attitudes. In this case, the sexual attitude variables that contributed to the prediction of viewing the particular subgenre may use to reaffirm their identities.

For sexual permissiveness, a negative relationship was found in regards to the RTV subgenre GameDocs. As sexual permissive scores decreased, the amount of hours viewing GameDocs increased. Gamedocs is considered one of the most popular reality television genres; shows include *Big Brother*, *Survivor*, and *Amazing Race*. In this study, minority women who approved of the sexual objectification of women with a non-CDFR major were more likely to view GameDocs. GameDocs provides various interactions among participants that include sexual encounters and stereotypical behavior. Shows where women are viewed as sexual objects may be more popular for women who approve of women being viewed as a sexual object. In contrast, previous research supports the opposite direction done by Zhang, Miller, and Harrison (2008) who found a positive relationship between exposure to sexual music videos and emerging adult's premarital sexual permissiveness attitudes. Similarly, Eyal and Kunkel (2008) who found that exposure to more sexually explicit music videos was associated with more permissive attitudes toward premarital sex regardless of gender.

Individuals who reported endorsing sexual permissiveness less tended to view more hours of RTV programming such as *Big Brother and Survivor*. From a SCT perspective,



individuals who do not endorse sexual permissiveness may not seek GameDocs as it may not grasp their attention. The first step in the modeling process is attention. If these show are unable to capture the audience attention it less likely that will report viewing shows. Uses and gratification posits that individual view shows to fulfill a specific gratification. Here, shows may not be used to fulfill any of the individual needs (i.e., information, identification, integration and social interaction, or diversion).

A positive correlation was found between the sexual objectification of men and Docusoaps. When investigating gender differences among the significant RTV subgenres, women were more likely than men to watch this type of RTV subgenre. Minority women with a non-CDFR major who reported higher sexual attitudes scores were more likely to watch these programs. Docusoaps include shows such as *Jersey Shore* and *The Real Housewives of...* that follows the lives of an individual. As mentioned earlier, Docusoaps can serve as a platform to discuss sexual topics (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2006). In this case, DocuSoaps may present the lives of individuals who approve of the sexual objectification of men. Emerging adults who had higher sexual attitudes scores may view Docusoaps because the content captures their attention. They also have the cognitive ability, ability to reproduce the behavior, and motivation to model what is being viewed on the show. Emerging adulthood is a period when adults are developing and exploring their sexual identity. Uses and gratification posits that viewers may select shows that viewers can gain information from the shows they view. These messages may be more critical during the time where emerging adults are developing their attitudes and beliefs.

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations with the current study. The sample size of 91 participants deemed the results non-generalizable. A majority of the participants were White females. In

particular, the number of male participants was significantly lower than the number of female participants. Also, there was a lack of diversity in Race/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation. A more diverse sample could have produced different results. For instance, a diverse ethnic sample may have yielded more difference among the dependent variable. The current study included a majority White sample which may not depict the overall results for particular minority groups. Previous research suggests that sexual orientation was an important variable when investigating sexual objectification (Kozak, Frankenhauser, & Roberts, 2009). Consequently, the study could not examine if sexual orientation was an important variable in the sexual objectification of sexes. In addition, the ordinal measure Sexual Objectification of Men and Women could not be located and as a result a modified version was used. Using the original scales may have yielded different results, as it may have captured different responses as it included more statements towards objectification.

### **Implications**

Research on RTV programs is a new area of scholarly research. Future research should focus on defining subgenres and examining distinctive differences among those categories already developed. Furthermore, content analyses can capture the sexual content in the various subgenres of RTV programs. Qualitative research can provide a more in-depth understanding of how and why emerging adults view RTV programs. Additionally, other types of research design such as experimental or longitudinal can assist in answering research questions about the direction of causality of the relationship found in the present study. Future research also should expand the demographics of the participants in order to assess the contribution for variables such as age, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation. For practitioners on university campuses, it is important that sexuality is addressed in order for emerging adults to receive accurate information. Because of the prevalence of media use among emerging adults, an integration of

media and sexual education can be a method to attract and disseminate accurate information. Investigating the relationship between emerging adults' sexual attitudes and their sexual decision making can assist with creating interventions that can combat the engagement of unprotected sex with multiple partners which increases the likelihood of having unplanned pregnancies, abortions, and contracting sexual transmitted infections (Arnett, 2011).

Sexuality is a critically developmental issue for emerging adults and messages received during this time may have salient effects on sexual behaviors and attitudes during this period (Levin, Ward, & Neilson, 2012). Reality television can assist emerging adults to identify social norms or gender behaviors within their society. The majority of emerging adults in the current study were occasional to frequent viewers of at least one subgenre of RTV programs. Although the research is limited, the current study contributes to knowledge of emerging adult's sexuality. Specifically, capturing emerging adults' attitudes in regards to sexual objectification of both sexes. To date, this is the first study to examine the relationship between sexual permissiveness, sexual objectification of women and men, and sexual double standards. In addition, the findings extend research on emerging adults and their RTV viewing habits. Thus, the results of the current study advance our understanding of emerging adulthood, provide implications for future research, and serve a foundation for further research in the area of reality television programs.

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## APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL



**EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY**

**University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board  
Office**

4N-70 Brody Medical Sciences Building · Mail Stop 682

600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834

Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** · [www.ecu.edu/irb](http://www.ecu.edu/irb)

### Notification of Amendment Approval

From: Social/Behavioral IRB

To: [Aisha Powell](#)

CC: [Sharon Ballard](#)

Date: 2/12/2013

Re: [Ame1\\_UMCIRB 12-002255](#)

[UMCIRB 12-002255](#)

Sexual Attitudes and Reality Television

Your Amendment has been reviewed and approved using expedited review on 2/12/2013. It was the determination of the UMCIRB Chairperson (or designee) that this revision does not impact the overall risk/benefit ratio of the study and is appropriate for the population and procedures proposed.

Please note that any further changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. A continuing or final review must be submitted to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The approval includes the following items:

Name	Description	Modified	Version
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There are no items to display

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

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## **APPENDIX B: PERMISSION LETTER**

I am a graduate student at East Carolina University in the Child Development and Family Relations department. I am conducting a research study as part of the requirement of my degree in Child Development and Family Relations, and I would like to invite you to participate. The purpose of this research is to explore emerging adults' sexual attitudes and their time spent with different sub genres of reality television. By doing this research, I hope to learn if there is a relationship between emerging adults' sexual attitudes and their reality television choice. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey that will take approximately 10 minutes. Your participation is totally voluntary and anonymous.

Because this research is overseen by the ECU Institutional Review Board, some of its members or staff may need to review my research data. However, the information you provide will not be linked to you in any way. Therefore, your responses cannot be traced back to you by anyone, including me.

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the UMCIRB Office at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director of UMCIRB Office, at 252-744-1971

You do not have to take part in this research, and you can stop at any time. If you decide you are willing to take part in this study, please continue on with the survey by clicking next.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my research.

With kind regards,

Aisha L. Powell, Principal Investigator

## APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

### Age

What is your current age?

### Racial/Ethnic Identity

How would you describe your race/ethnicity:

- American Indian / Native American
- Asian
- Black (Non-Hispanic)
- White (Non-Hispanic)
- Hispanic / Latino
- Pacific Islander
- Two or More Races
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Gender

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

### Relationship status

What is your current relationship status?

- Single (not dating or in a relationship)
- Casually dating
- Exclusively dating (Monogamous)
- Engaged
- Cohabiting
- Married
- Divorced, Married, or Widowed

### Sexual orientation

Please indicate your sexual orientation:

- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Bisexual

Please indicate your academic rank:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate Student

Please provide your major.

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## APPENDIX D: BRIEF SEXUAL ATTITUDES SCALE

Listed below are several statements that reflect different attitudes about sex. For each statement fill in the response on the answer sheet that indicates how much you agree or disagree with that statement.

For each statement:

**A** = Strongly agree

**B** = Moderately agree

**C** = Neutral - neither agree nor disagree

**D** = Moderately disagree

**E** = Strongly disagree

1. I do not need to be committed to a person to have sex with him/her.
2. Casual sex is acceptable.
3. I would like to have sex with many partners.
4. One-night stands are sometimes very enjoyable.
5. It is okay to have ongoing sexual relationships with more than one person at a time.
6. Sex as a simple exchange of favors is okay if both people agree to it.
7. The best sex is with no strings attached.
8. Life would have fewer problems if people could have sex more freely.
9. It is possible to enjoy sex with a person and not like that person very much.
10. It is okay for sex to be just good physical release.

**Note.** The BSAS includes the instructions shown at the top. The items are given in the order shown. The BSAS is usually part of a battery with items numbered consecutively. For purposes of analyses, we have A=1 and E=5. (The scoring may be reversed, so that A = strongly disagree, etc.) A participant receives four subscale scores, based on the mean score for a particular subscale (i.e., we add up the 10 items on Permissiveness and divide by 10). An overall scale score is really not useful.



## **APPENDIX E: SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION INVENTORY**

Listed below are several statements that reflect different attitudes about the sexual objectification for men and women. Please indicate your response to each statement.

### Male Objectification

1. It is okay to check out an attractive man at a bar or dance club.
2. It is okay to whistle at or call out to an attractive man that you have never met.
3. I approve of male strip clubs.
4. It is okay to hire a male stripper for my best friend's bachelor party.
5. If there was a wet t-shirt contest on my Spring Break itinerary, I would go to it.
6. When men are out at a club, it is okay to think of them as "eye candy."
7. Men dancing in cages for entertainment purposes is exciting to me.
8. It is okay to evaluate men's bodies as they pass by on the street.

### Female Objectification

1. It is okay for men to check out attractive women at bars or dance clubs.
2. It is okay for men to whistle or call out to attractive women that they don't know.
3. I approve of female strip clubs.
4. It is okay if men hire female strippers for bachelor parties.
5. When on Spring Break, men should be able to attend and enjoy wet t-shirt contests.
6. When women are out at club, it is okay for men to think of them as "eye candy."
7. It is fine for women to dance in cages as entertainment for male onlookers.
8. It is okay if men evaluate women's bodies as they pass by on the street.

Note. All items used 7-point Likert-type scales from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

## APPENDIX F: SEXUAL DOUBLE STANDARD SCALE

Listed below are several statements that reflect different attitudes about sexual double standards. For each statement fill in the response that indicates how much you disagree or agree with that statement.

1. It is worse for a woman to sleep around than it is for a man.
2. It is best for a guy to lose his virginity before he is out of his teens
3. It is okay for a woman to have more than one sexual relationship at the same time.
4. It is just as important for a man be a virgin when he marries as it is for a woman.
5. I approve of a 16-year-old girl having sex just as much as a 16- year-old boy having sex.
6. I kind of admire a girl who has had sex with a lot of guys.
7. I kind of feel sorry for a 21-year-old woman who is still a virgin.
8. A woman having casual is just as acceptable to me as a man having casual sex.
9. It's okay for a man to have sex with a woman he is not in love with.
10. I kind of admire a guy who has a lot of sex with girls.
11. A woman initiate's sex is too aggressive.
12. It's okay for a man to have more than one sexual relationship at the same time.
13. I question the character if a woman who has had if sexual partners.
14. I admire a man who is a virgin when he gets married.
15. A man should be more sexually experience than his wife.
16. A girl who has sex on the first date is "easy".
17. I kind of feel sorry for a 21-year-old man who is still a virgin.
18. I question the character of a man who has had a lot of sexual partners.
19. Women are naturally more monogamous than are men.
20. A man should be sexually experienced when gets married.
21. A guy who has sex on the first date is "easy".
22. It's okay for a woman to have sex with a man she is not in love with.
23. A woman should be sexually experienced when she gets married.
24. It's best for a girl to lose her virginity before she's out of her teens.
25. I admire a woman who is a virgin when she gets married.
26. A man who initiates sex is too aggressive.

