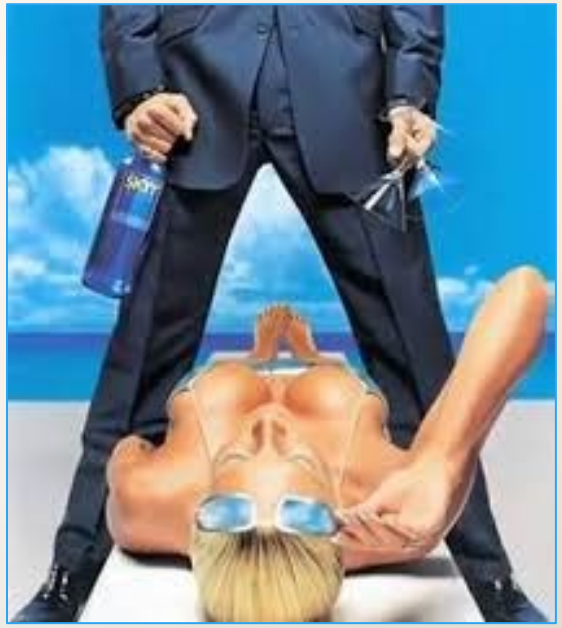


LECTURE: SEXUAL SOCIALISATION

TWO MAIN AREAS OF RESEARCH:

OBJECTIFICATION OF THE GENDERS &

KNOWLEDGE AND SELF CATEGORISATION

INTRODUCTION

- THROUGH SOCIALIZATION, MASS MEDIA TEACH AND REINFORCE SOCIETAL VALUES.
- SOCIALIZATION INVOLVES LEARNING THE VALUES AND NORMS OF SOCIETY AT CERTAIN TIMES OF PEOPLE'S LIVES.
- CHILDREN (FEW LIFE EXPERIENCES) ARE THE MAIN TARGET FOR SOCIALIZING MESSAGES.
- BUT, SOCIALIZATION OCCURS WHENEVER PEOPLE ENTER A NEW LIFE STAGE OR TRY A NEW LIFE STYLE.
- ADOLESCENCE- AS CHILDREN GROW TO ADULTHOOD AND EXPERIENCE NEW FREEDOMS, NEW RELATIONSHIPS, AND NEW RESPONSIBILITIES.
- EVEN ADULTS UNDERGO SOCIALIZATION. NEWLY ARRIVED IMMIGRANTS, WHEN PEOPLE BEGIN NEW JOBS, THEY OFTEN NEED TO BE SOCIALIZED TO THE CORPORATE CULTURE OF THEIR WORKPLACE.

- Mass media are only one of several sources of socialisation.
- Other societal institutions; family, peers, school, can offer more immediate and personal socialization.
- The mass media, though, are easily accessible and attended to by large groups of people.
- For the youngest children, most concerns are about the negative effects of TV because it is the medium that most children use and it is viewed in the home, with limited skills required to watch and understand.
- Children adopt the role models of the media. They imitate; they want lunch boxes and Halloween costumes etc.
- Some children have limited social contact with other societal institutions, therefore there is concern about mass media's potential negative effects on children's knowledge about society.

Channel 4 - Mums make porn documentary series

ACQUISITION OF STEREOTYPES

- Stereotypes "beliefs about the characteristics and attributes of a group and its members that shape how people think about and respond to the group" (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, & Esses, 2010, p. 8).

- Stereotypes - simplistic representations of social groups that deny any diversity among group members.

- Stereotypes can be negative and limiting. Children are at risk of being exposed to stereotypes as they watch TV because it is replete with stereotyped representations of social groups.

- Time limitations of TV programmes also dictate that character development and identification be straightforward.

- Content analyses have found that TV is filled with stereotyped images of many groups.

FEMALE STEREOTYPES

- Whilst there are strong, non-traditional female characters on television (Lauzen, Dozier, & Horan, 2008), the overwhelming pattern is one of underrepresentation and traditional female images.
- Females are outnumbered by males by about 2 to 1 on prime-time TV (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004; Children Now, 2004).
- This is somewhat dependent on programme genre, with women being least represented in action programs and reality TV, and somewhat more equitably present in situation comedies and dramas (Signorielli, 2012).

- On children's TV, there are even fewer female characters; males outnumber females 4 to 1 (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004; Signorielli, 2012).
- News programs also underrepresent women. Yi and Dearfield (2012) show that only 21.7% of the guests on Sunday morning news programmes were women.
- The Global Media Monitoring Project in 2010 reported that about 24% of the sources in the news worldwide are women (Macharia, O'Connor, & Ndganam, 2010).

- When fictional women characters appear, they are usually younger than males (Signorielli, 2012; Yi & Dearfield, 2012) and are more often shown in home, family, and romantic contexts (Lauzen et al., 2008) than at work.

- Family and career do not mix on TV; married female characters are much less likely to be employed than single or divorced women (Signorielli, 2012).

- When fictional women characters do have careers and family, the programmes still usually focus on the interpersonal aspects of their lives (Lauzen et al., 2008).

- Commercials also reinforce these patterns. Although women are not underrepresented, they are typically subservient to men (Neuhaus, 2011).

- A study of national TV prime-time ad`s confirms Neuhaus' argument - two-thirds of those seen doing chores were women, most of them mothers. And, when men were shown doing housework, it was most often in a humorous light, illustrating their incompetence (Scharrer, Kim, Lin, & Liu, 2006).

- Commercials in children's cartoons also reveal gender stereotyping. Boys in commercials are seen more often, they have more dominant roles and are more active. Girls, on the other hand, are shyer, "giggly," and less central to the ads (Browne, 1998).

FEMALE STEREOTYPE CONCLUSIONS:

- The stereotype of women presented on TV is that women are valued for youth, attractiveness, and traditional roles.
- With children as young as 3, researchers have found that heavier viewers of TV are more likely to endorse traditional, stereotypic gender-role statements (e.g., Beuf, 1974; Durkin, 1985; McGhee & Frueh, 1980; Morgan, 1987; Van Evra, 2004).

- Meta-analyses of the literature concludes that television has an overall effect of r = .101 on holding gender-role stereotypes across all age groups (Herrett-Skjellum & Allen, 1996).
- Among children under 3, the average correlation between amount of TV and holding gender-role stereotypes is r = .33; for children from age 6 to 10, the average correlation is r = .16.

Young children might be particularly susceptible to the effects of stereotypes given their level of cognitive development (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004).

OTHER STEREOTYPES

THE ELDERLY

- COHORTS OF THE UNDER 55`S ARE GROWING BUT STILL UNDERREPRESENTED.
- LAUZEN AND DOZIER (2005) ADULTS 60 AND OLDER WERE ONLY 4% OF THE MAJOR CHARACTERS IN PRIME-TIME TV, DESPITE THAT THEY REPRESENT 18% OF THE ACTUAL POPULATION.
- ALSO, OLDER MEN OUTNUMBER OLDER WOMEN ON TV (HARWOOD & ANDERSON, 2002; SIGNORIELLI, 2004, 2012).
- LITTLE RESEARCH ON HOW MEDIA AFFECTS CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF OLDER ADULTS.

RACE/ETHNICITY

- CONTENT ANALYSES REVEAL THAT TV'S PORTRAYAL OF RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS IS LIMITED. MOST RESEARCH HAS FOCUSED ON THE PRESENTATION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS ON TV.
- ON TV NEWS, AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE CONSISTENTLY OVERREPRESENTED AS CRIMINALS (DIXON, 2007; MASTRO, 2009).
- VIDEO GAMES ALSO REINFORCE STEREOTYPES, PARTICULARLY OF MINORITY MALES (ALMOST NO MINORITY FEMALES DEPICTED).
- IN CONTENT ANALYSIS OF 150 GAMES, WILLIAMS, MARTINS, CONSALVO, AND IVORY (2009) DISCOVERED THAT VIDEO GAMES OFFER AN EVEN MORE DISTORTED PICTURE THAN TV FOR THE NUMBER OF FEMALE AND MINORITY CHARACTERS PORTRAYED.

EFFECTS OF STEREOTYPES

Stereotypes - “generalized beliefs about a group that are widely held within a particular culture” (Hummert, Shaner, & Garstka, 1995, p. 106).

- Researchers once believed that the presence of stereotypes inevitably meant that people would behave in prejudiced ways.
- But social psychologists have demonstrated that even though knowledge of stereotypes is shared by nearly everyone in a culture, not everyone accepts stereotypes as accurate (see, e.g., Devine, 1989).
- Even so, stereotypes are cognitive structures that impact the encoding and processing of information (Brown Givens & Monahan, 2005; Dixon, 2007).

EFFECTS OF STEREOTYPING

- Stereotypes can be harmful because they objectify, depersonalize, and deny individuality (Enteman, 1996).
- The pervasiveness of stereotypes in the mass media drives concerns for effects because these are the dominant, if not only, images in the media of certain groups; there may be few alternative images to counter the stereotypes.

- These stereotyped images may serve to justify inequitable conditions in society.
- Negative stereotypes offer potentially adverse effects, because they can be incorporated into our beliefs and attitudes about other groups (Van Evra, 2004).
- Racial/ethnic stereotypes may lead to fear and limit social interaction among different groups.
- Stereotypes might also affect how people interact with the elderly. For example, older adults report that physicians sometimes provide them with oversimplified information or talk to their family members instead of talking directly to the elderly patient (Walker, 2010).

COGNITIVE TRANSACTIONAL MODEL

Stereotypes are person schemas categorized along a dimension, such as gender, age, or ethnicity. As schemas, stereotypes serve a function: they help people deal with the information that they encounter daily. Stereotypes also help people deal with uncertainty in their environment.

E.g: If we are stranded late at night in a place we have never been, with no reception, how do we know which house to go to ask for help? With no direct experience, we might be more likely to go to the house with the children's bicycle on the porch, instead of the house with a Harley Davidson in the driveway.

The cognitive-transactional model offers several explanations for –

(a) how media content is linked to the acquisition of stereotypes about social groups,

(b) how media content affects the development of self-concept, or schemas about ourselves and the groups to which we belong, and

(c) how media-primed stereotypes affect responses to members of other groups.

ACQUISITION OF STEREOTYPES

Media content can lead to the acquisition of new stereotyped schemas, and provide reinforcement of existing schemas.

- Young children have few opportunities for direct experiences with people outside their own family and family members tend to be very much alike.
- So, young children's sole experience with different groups is most likely vicarious, through television or other media.
- Because young children are dependent on media for information, that information is more likely to have an effect (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976). Children may develop schemas about groups in society that they have no direct experience with, based on the images they see in the media (Van Evra, 2004).

- Are the effects from television viewing and other media use long term?
- Schemas are modified through experience (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). As children gain experiences, they attach new knowledge to pre-existing schemas, making them more complex.
- In adults, stereotypes tend not to be applied to groups as a whole.
- Adults recognize the variability among members of a group. Stereotypes, instead, become applied to subgroups that share the characteristics of exemplars of stereotypes (Brown Givens & Monahan, 2005).

- Just as people hold schemas about others, they also hold self-schemas.
- Self-schemas are mental representations of one's "own personality attributes, social roles, past experience, future goals, and the like" (Fiske & Taylor, 1991, pp. 181–182).
- Self-schemas are self-concepts. They include attributes that are relevant and important; self-schemas do not include irrelevant material. For example, if weight and physical appearance are important to an adolescent girl, then, they will be part of her self-schema and vice versa.

DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-SCHEMAS

- People are attentive to self-schematic information they encounter (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).
- So, self-relevant constructs are important in selective attention to and perception of media content.
- evidence shows that self-schemas may be derived in part from media content.

In a longitudinal panel study with preteen Black and White girls and boys, Martins and Harrison (2012) found that “television exposure predicted a decrease in self-esteem for all children except White boys” (p. 351).

Rivadeneyra, Ward, and Gordon (2007) found that increased media use is correlated with lower self-esteem in the areas of appearance and social skills, although in their studies it was not related to an overall measure of self-esteem.

If people internalize stereotypes, there can be several consequences: Self-esteem is predictive of other important variables ; motivation, academic achievement, health of peer relationships, and risk of engaging in unhealthy behaviour (Crocker & Garcia, 2010; Martins & Harrison, 2012).

Among older people, a positive self-concept can have physiological effects: Levy and her colleagues (2002) found that individuals with positive self-perceptions about aging lived 7½ years longer than people with less positive beliefs.

Low self-esteem fostered by acceptance of negative self-stereotypes can impact many facets of people's lives.

Social psychologists have also identified a phenomenon known as stereotype threat - members of a stigmatized group underperform on tasks that are related to stereotypes about groups to which they belong.

So, for example, if women are told that past scores on a difficult math test have indicated gender differences, they tend to perform significantly worse than men.

However, if the stereotype is removed by telling women that both genders have done equally well, they perform equally well (Crocker & Garcia, 2010).

Stereotype lift has also been identified: groups who are supposed to be “better at” something actually perform better when the stereotype is made salient than when it is not (Crocker & Garcia, 2010; Walton & Cohen, 2003).

Stereotypes in media are by no means the only source of one’s self-concept, but they can contribute to the development and reinforcement of self-schemas.

RESPONSES BASED ON MEDIA-ACTIVATED STEREOTYPES

- Media content - an effective prime. it can activate stereotypes, influencing how subsequent information is processed and thereby affect how people respond to various groups in society or evaluate themselves against media standards (Dixon, 2007; Mastro, 2009).

- Priming is a result of automatic mental processing, based on the most salient characteristics of a person; physical appearance, for example, is a strong cue to a stereotype (Schneider, Hastorf, & Ellsworth, 1979).

- It makes sense that TV images and other visual media prime stereotypes.
- Like other schemas, once a stereotype is activated it guides and filters other incoming information (Oliver & Fonash, 2012).
- When stereotypes are activated repeatedly, as is often the case with media, relevant schemas become more and more easily accessible.

- When stereotypes are activated - beliefs about and actions toward others are impacted.
- Dixon (2007) found that people who were exposed to TV news stories about a crime where the race of the suspect and the race of the police officer were not specified assumed that the criminal was Black and the police officer White.

- Both pornographic films (Hald, Malamuth, & Yuen, 2010; McKenzie-Mohr & Zanna, 1990) and music videos (Aubrey, Hopper, & Mbure, 2011; Hansen & Hansen, 1988) have been found to activate stereotyped gender-role schemas and influence how men respond to women.

- There is also evidence that some types of media content can activate stereotyped **self-schemas.**

- Aubrey, Henson, Hopper, and Smith (2009) found that women who viewed images of female models who were exposing a good deal of skin used more negative descriptors of their own appearance than women who viewed the control images.

- Geis et al. (1984) noted that college women who saw women in sex-typed commercials were more likely to emphasize homemaking in essays about what their lives would be like in 10 years.

CUMULATIVE MODEL

- Cultivation theory is explained by the cumulative model.
- Content analyses consistently reveal that prime-time TV content of the major networks is similar (Signorielli, 2012). there are certainly differences between specific TV programmes but overall TV presents a consistent set of images:
  - Men are overrepresented,
  - Women and minorities (except for African Americans) are underrepresented,
  - Violence is pervasive and common.
  - Groups are presented stereotypically.

- Because the images are consistent and similar across TV channels, greater immersion leads to a belief that the real world resembles the television world.
- Although cultivation was initially proposed to describe and predict effects of violent media content, it is being used more often to describe how children's socialization is affected by TV viewing.

- The cultivation hypothesis predicts that heavier television viewing is linked to holding more stereotyped views of social groups (Morgan et al., 2009).
- There is support for cultivation: Viewers who watch a lot of television are more likely than other viewers to believe rape myths, and to overestimate the number of false reports of rape (Kahlor & Eastin, 2011).
- Heavy viewers also are more likely to hold racist beliefs (Mastro, 2009).

- Cultivation theory can help explain the effects of stereotyped television content on children.
- Repeated exposure to inaccurate images can contribute to what children learn about society.
- However, the theory was developed when the broadcast networks provided the majority of content to which people were exposed. Does cultivation theory still have explanatory power in today's media environment?

Morgan and colleagues (2009) argue that the proliferation of content options has not led to a major shift in the diversity of portrayals of various social groups As there is evidence that other forms of media repeat these stereotypes both in terms of exclusion and of stereotyped portrayals of members of minority groups.

In an analysis of video game magazines and video game covers, Burgess et al. (2011) found that minorities were underrepresented compared to their percentage in the population. In fact, there were more space aliens than there were minority human characters. Moreover, the minorities that were portrayed, were in stereotypic roles – Black men as athletes or thugs; Asians as martial artists, and so on. If stereotyped content is repetitious across different media forms, one would expect cultivation effects to be heightened.

CONDITIONAL MODEL

After reviewing the various theories, Van Evra (2004) formulated a model that describes the effects as conditional on various aspects of the child.
Van Evra argued that there are key individual differences in how social relationship and social category variables are important in understanding if and how television will affect a child:
1. Viewing motives (entertainment or information);
2. Perceived reality;
3. Viewing time (heavy or light viewing);
4. The number of alternative information sources available (e.g., parental discussion, real-life exposure to minority groups, access to other media);
5. Age, gender, socioeconomic status, program preferences, level of cognitive development.

According to this model, TV should have its strongest impact on a child's body of knowledge when the child watches television as a source of information, when the child believes that television content is realistic, when the child watches television a lot, and has few other alternative sources of information.

- Although all aspects of this model have not been tested, there is theoretical support for several of its linkages.
- it is clear that children and adolescents watch TV for different reasons (Roe & Minnebo, 2007).
- Lower income children are more likely than higher income children to watch TV for information and have fewer alternative sources.
- Children also vary in their beliefs about how real television is (e.g., Potter, 1988), and perceived realism does affect acceptance of some media messages (Perse, 1986; Pouliot & Cowen, 2007).
- Knowledge-gap research (Tichenor, Donohue, & Olien, 1970) points out how education and income influence access to different mass media.

LEARNING UNHEALTHY BEHAVIOURS

- Adolescents are also of concern about socialization effects as adolescence is a period of great change during which there is a tension between childhood and adulthood.
- During this time, adolescents begin to establish independence, become more oriented toward relationships with friends, with peers, begin to form their sexual identity, and establish romantic and sexual relationships; also, they begin to move into adult roles and accept more adult responsibilities (Strasburger, Wilson, & Jordan, 2009).
- This is accompanied by uncertainty. They spend more time with media than with any other activity, with the exception of sleep (D. F. Roberts & Foehr, 2008). So it should be no surprise that many teens turn to the media for information and advice, particularly about their developing identity (Strasburger et al., 2009; Van Evra, 2004).

- Parents and scholars are concerned that media might encourage adolescents to try adult behaviours before they are mature enough to handle the consequences; or, that media might provide models for unhealthy behaviours associated with adulthood.

- Much concern still focuses on TV as a source of negative effects, because it remains the single most used medium (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010; Strasburger, 2004).

- During the teenage years, the increased use of other media, especially social networking sites, mobile media such as smartphones and tablets, popular music, video games and magazines, means that adolescents are exposed to a greater range of messages about adult behaviours.

- Between 2005 and 2010, overall media use among 8 to 18 year-olds rose more than an hour per day to over 7½ hours.
- When factoring in the amount of time multitasking with multiple forms of media, they average nearly 10 hours and 45 minutes per day of media exposure (Rideout et al., 2010).

Adolescence - growing interest in sex. Most adolescents are under informed.
Brown, Childers, and Waszak (1990) summarized the reasons that media may be a potent source of effects on adolescents' sexual knowledge and behaviour:

1. They have little first hand experience;
2. Their best sources – parents and educators – are reluctant to provide information and adolescents may be embarrassed; and
3. Fear of appearing ignorant may lead them to rely on impersonal sources, such as the mass media.

- Media messages about sex are often inaccurate and incomplete and adolescents' interpretations may be incorrect and immature.
- Depictions of and discussions about sex are easily found in almost all media, but are especially prevalent in television, movies, life-style magazines, and on the Internet.
- The content may become a source of effects on sexual knowledge and behaviour.

LEARNING UNHEALTHY BEHAVIOURS - SEXUAL VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

Wright, Malamuth, and Donnerstein (2012) identified two types of sexual media content:

a) Embedded sexual content, where the depictions of sex take place within a nonsexual content; and

(b) Explicit sexual content, the primary intent of which is to arouse the audience.

SOCIALISATION VIA EMBEDDED SEXUAL CONTENT

The amount of sexual content on television is increasing, with more than two of three programmes containing talk about sex, sexual behaviour, or both (Kunkel, Eyal, Finnerty, Biely, & Donnerstein, 2005).

Because TV is regulated by the FCC, the content of prime-time TV contains mostly implied sexual behaviour and innuendo (Harris & Barlett, 2009). Satellite TV has more explicit content, because these channels are not subject to the same regulation. Movies also feature more explicit scenes (Strasburger et al., 2009).

In a review of movies over last 20 years, almost one-third of these films featured between one and seven scenes of sexual behaviour (Gunasekera, Chapman, & Campbell, 2005).
Magazines targeted at adolescents of both genders also contain material related to sex (Wright et al., 2012).

Findings from the research
Not only is sexual content easily observed, but its lessons are often inaccurate. sexual activity is more common among unmarried couples (Lemish, 2007). References to contraception are rare throughout the media environment (Strasburger et al., 2009).
The risks and negative consequences of sexual activity are rarely presented or discussed.
Kunkel and his colleagues (2005) found 90% of prime time TV contained sexual talk and/or behaviour, only 11% contained any mention or risks or responsibilities.
Gunasekera and colleagues (2005) found zero mention of STD`s in movies and Taylor (2005) did not find a single article in male life-style magazines related to consequences of sexual behaviour.
Conversely in young women`s magazines, about half of the articles dealing with sexuality mentioned possible risks.

Findings continued
Despite recent changes in public opinion, homosexuality is still largely invisible and heterosexuality is still very much the norm. An analysis of characters in prime-time TV (2011–2012) found only 2.9% of series regulars are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (GLAAD, 2012).
Concerns about the effects of sexual media content focus on its impact on the development of accurate knowledge, and of healthy sexual attitudes and behaviours.
Some studies report positive knowledge gain as a result of exposure (Harris & Barlett, 2009). following an episode of Friends where an unplanned pregnancy resulted after a condom failed, 65% of teenagers who watched the show reported learning that condoms could fail (Collins, Elliott, Berry, Kanouse, & Hunter, 2003).
Increased knowledge was strong for teens who talked to an adult about what they saw.
More often, however, media use is associated with inaccurate knowledge. Increased media exposure predicts naïve beliefs about risks, including the likelihood of teen mothers finishing education and obtaining work (Wright et al., 2012).
Young heavy media users also overestimate the frequency with which their peers are engaging in sex, and are more likely to believe that having sex would result in positive consequences (Wright et al., 2012).

Exposure to sexual media content is linked to attitudes about sex and sexual behaviour. Researchers have observed that greater exposure to sexual television programs is linked to positive attitudes toward sexual permissiveness and recreational sex (Strasburger et al., 2009)

Studies of the impact of reality television dating programs suggest that viewers who perceive the shows as more “real” are more likely to endorse the attitudes displayed in such shows (Ferris, Smith, Greenberg, & Smith, 2007)

Content analyses suggest that media messages place the responsibility for safe-sex on females rather than males. And an experimental study using television programs with or without depictions of condom use found that safe-sex messages increased female college students’ positivity toward condom use, but had no effect on male students’ attitudes (Farrar, 2006).

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Mass communication is a powerful agent in directing human behaviour. In the simplest of terms, social learning explains that people can model the actions that they observe in the media. Social learning theory is a cognitive approach that emphasizes the importance of mental activity as a precursor to action.

- Attention and retention
- Production
- Motivation- inhibit or facilitate

CRITIQUE OF SLT

- CANNOT EXPLAIN THE EFFECTS OF MEDIA CONTENT THAT ONLY INFERS AN ACTION- SUCH AS THE USE OF MANY BIRTH CONTROL DEVICES, OR SEXUAL ACTS
- MERE EXPOSURE IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR SOCIAL LEARNING. OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING IS AN ACTIVE AND MOTIVATED LEARNING PROCESS- SOCIALIZATION EFFECTS OF THE MASS MEDIA ARE NOT BASED ON SHORT-TERM MIMICRY

- MEDIA CONTENT IS ONLY ONE SOURCE OF SOCIAL LEARNING. CHILDREN MAY BE EXPOSED TO MUCH MEDIA CONTENT, BUT THEY ALSO HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO OBSERVE PARENTS, SIBLINGS, PEERS, AND TEACHERS. THESE PRESUMABLY POSITIVE MODELS SHOULD EXERT INFLUENCE ON BEHAVIOUR BECAUSE OF SALIENCE, RELEVANCE, UTILITY, AND MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

- CALVIN KLEIN JEANS

Adolescents are portrayed as being sexualised sometimes even before completing puberty

SEXUAL SOCIALISATION- BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

TELEVISION:
Ybarra (2011) TV is actually the highest contributor for exposure to explicit material in 10-15 yr olds. Surprisingly the internet is the least.

MOVIES/SITCOMS:
These contain the most explicit material: think Spartacus, Secret Diary of a Call Girl, Skins, TOWIE (Strauss, 2010).

The overall message is that appearance, money, power and success is paramount; coupled with being `hot`.

However, we need a broader definition of sex- we do learn what it means to be male, female, gay, straight etc. we learn how we should behave towards others, how should we treat minorities…

SEXUAL MEDIA-TV

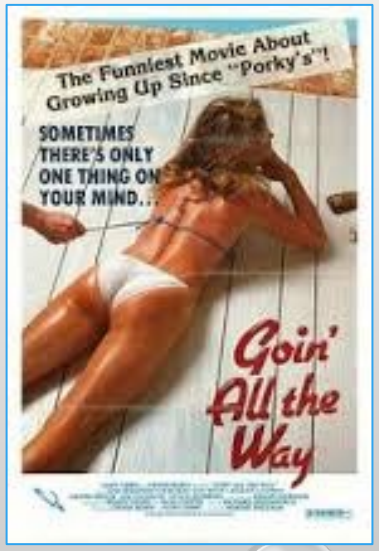
- Mainstream TV is not kind to teenage girls because it still contains a disproportionate number of white males in lead characters/roles.
- One quarter of remarks on PTTV are cat calling, jokes etc., particularly in comedies.
- 17% of all comments made are directed towards nudity or body frame.

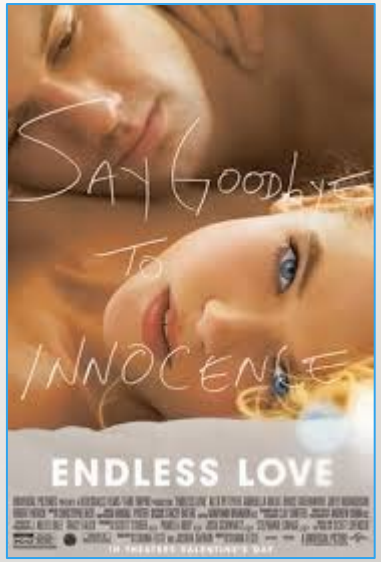
- Little girls do not go unnoticed- Take the Abercrombie & Fitch `wink wink` or `eye candy` underwear aimed at 7year olds…
- Some argue that our bodies have become dismembered and the focus is on the legs and breasts- for men too! (Mager & Helgeson, 2011).

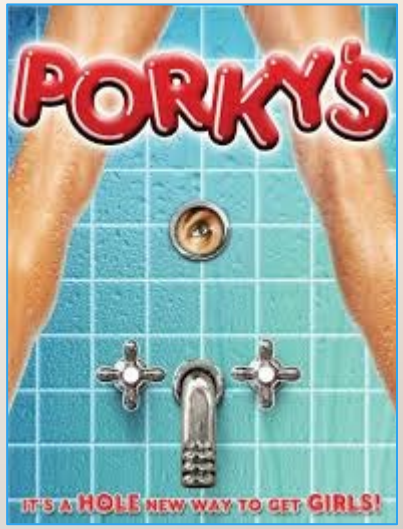
SEXUAL MEDIA-MOVIES

Contrary to popular belief, movies are less significant than TV. Why? However, they still are highly influential…

- Even films rated as PG in this country or R in the US have 7 times more explicit content than the TV.
- Greenberg (1994) notes that movies do what TV only suggests….
- From 1970-1989 there was a `sexploitation` in teenage films.
- e.g. Porky`s, going all the way, endless love….
- And from 1999 American Pie has taken on from where they left off, specifically to cater for the first generation who were almost solely taught by MTV to act as sex objects for each other (Glieberman, 1999).



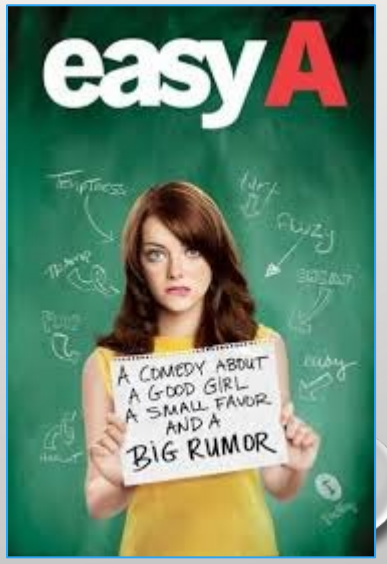




SEXUAL MEDIA-MOVIES

Almost always, sex is seen from the `horny male` perspective, with males being over represented and females under represented.
The depiction of explicit sexual content has definitely increased (Bleakley et al., 2012).

One study of 122 family films between 2006-09 found 1 in every 4 female characters was depicted in tight, sexy or alluring attire compared to only 4% of males (Smith & Choueti, 2010).



However, there have been a few films that have attempted to represent the responsible side of sexuality, e.g. Juno, Thirteen and Easy A.
But they have been met with mixed success.

SEXUAL MEDIA- ADVERTISEMENTS

- Print media and advertising appears to reflect the same as television and film. However, there has been a definite shift from the naïve and innocent romance to a clinical sexual function.
- Content analysis of men's magazines found that they concentrate on nudity and male sexual pleasure (Coy & Horvath, 2011) and in female magazines the focus is on being attractive, hot and sexy…

BOTH male and female magazines focus on `having great sex`
In contrast, STI`s are portrayed as repulsive, YET casual sex for pleasure is considered perfectly acceptable… (Clarke, 2010).

Teen magazines are on the decline and currently `Seventeen` is the only one studied via content analysis (Zurbriggen et al., 2010) in the last decade.

Double messages: you need to be cute and innocent, but sexually experienced too…

SEXUAL MEDIA- MUSIC

Over the last 50 years music has become more provocative (Hall et al., 2001).
It is an important badge of identity for adolescents. Whilst TV still dominates for 15-18yr olds, by the age of 18 music is most important (Roberts & Christenson, 2012).

CA of 279 most popular songs of 2005:
RAP had most degrading lyrics compared to Country and R&B which had 45% and 28% non degrading music respectively.
Hall et al., (2011) of the top 174 songs of 2009, 92% had differing sexual messages, with an average of 11 references in each song (Hobbs & Gallup, 2011).
Incidentally, Opera had the same…

One reassuring point…
Roberts & Christenson (2012) found that most young people do not know the lyrics, they just like the beat…

- Behaviourally, music has impact, but less than other visual material.
- In one experiment, students were exposed to 4 sexually charged or 4 non sexually charged songs before being asked to rate personal ad`s online
- Those exposed to the sexually charged music placed a far higher emphasis on sex appeal (Carpentier et al., 2007). However, the research was correlational…

Longitudinal studies- in a national telephone survey of 1,500 teens aged 12-17 at 1 year then 3 year follow up, exposure to sexually explicit music was found to relate to earlier sex or more advanced sexual knowledge (Martino et al., 2006).

MUSIC VIDEO:
Obviously much greater potential than music alone
MTV turned 30 in 2011 and over the years has morphed into mainstream TV channels and shared via YouTube, Vevo, Facebook, our phones and our Tweets.

SEXUAL MEDIA-INTERNET & NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The new technologies allow for greater access to media 24/7 and bring with them a whole host of problems!

Whilst access to information has increased, it is not accurate.

Mann, (2012) reviewed 177 sexual health websites and found the information was of below average quality and even the most heavy of internet users had difficulty finding information!

And, Boyar et al., (2011) reported that the internet is the leading source of information for teens (40% more than for asking a parent).

SEXUAL MEDIA- SOCIAL NETWORKING

SOCIAL NETWORKING

- ONE QUARTER OF MYSPACE MENTIONED SEX (MORENO ET AL., 2009).
- ONLY 3 STUDIES TO DATE HAVE EXPLORED SEXUAL DISPLAYS IN SNS AND THE INTENTION TO HAVE SEX (MORENO ET AL., 2012).
- THIS REQUIRES EXPLORATION.

SEXTING

- OCCURS IN AS YOUNG AS 10 YR OLDS, CAN HAVE DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES.
- `SEXTORTION` IS THE NEW FORM- USING PICTURES (WILSON, 2010).
- GORDON-MESSER ET AL. (2012)- 17% FEMALES, 18% MALES SENT PICTURES, 31% FEMALES & 50% MALES HAD RECEIVED ONE.
- RICE ET AL. (2012) 31% ASKED FOR A PICTURE AND 57% HAD BEEN ASKED TO SEND ONE…

THE EFFECTS OF SEXUAL MEDIA VIEWING- ATTITUDES

The extent to which individuals believe sex to be recreational risk free and superficial.
NB obviously no studies exist where this has been experimentally studied…
BUT

Explicit viewing/exposure does impact our attitudes:

- Teens watching X rated films show dislike for condom use relative to their peers (Wingood et al., 2001).
- Viewing sexually explicit TV leads to more permissiveness to sex (Ward, 2003).
- Exposure is associated with dissatisfaction with being a virgin (Courtright & Bara, 1980) and normalised unusual sexual activities (Greenberg & Smith , 2002).
- Valkenberg (2007) high consumption leads to viewing women as objects.

THE EFFECTS OF SEXUAL MEDIA VIEWING- EXPECTATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES

Perceptions of peer norms and behaviours are highly influential. Believing that others are active is a key factor in initiating a sexual relationship. However, are these perceptions realistic?

Chia, (2006) found a positive correlation between TV viewing and a belief that females are sex objects, casual sex is acceptable, higher expectations of their partner and lower satisfaction in their sex lives.

Heavy viewers are more likely to believe that birth control is not necessary, a greater acceptance of date rape and a belief that heavier girls are not appealing (Zhang et al., 2008).

THE EFFECTS OF SEXUAL MEDIA VIEWING- BEHAVIOUR

Heavy media use of sexual material is associated with `sexual aging` even when statistically removing a range of social factors, resulting in 12 year olds engaging in behaviour equivalent to a 15year old. Furthermore, encountering sexual material in magazines is just as influential as on the TV and so it the written form or music (Pardun et al., 2005).

Age is a mediator- younger adolescents were more likely to watch the material – why?

Very limited findings to date on the use of the internet and resultant behaviour in teens. Why?

Martino et al. (2008) found the type of media content that 12-17year olds engaged with, was correlated with their subsequent sexual behaviour.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Why are teenagers so susceptible?
- They see the self as `egocentric` they are involved in their own personal fable wherein normal rules and norms are suspended.
- Whilst they may be in Piaget`s `formal operational stage, they are pseudostupid- they have difficulties in assigning priorities to decisions.
- They suffer cognitive distortions- overestimating the activities of their peers.
- They are prone to cognitive dissonance, acknowledging the role of the media but believing that it wont happen to them…

Pornography is beyond the scope of this lecture, but there is information out there if you choose…

Contraceptive advertisements and pro-social sexual contact on TV: Again, beyond the scope of the lecture, but there findings do exist- The impact can be significant, e.g.
`Friends` condom episode (2002) resulted in more than 10% of the teen viewers initiating conversation about condom use.

TO CONCLUDE…

Generally, despite what we believe, there is little sexual content aimed specifically at youth audiences, however there is no doubt that sexually suggestive clothing and sexual socialisation occurs.

Popular magazines, video games and music video may be normalising sexual behaviours for all teens who may not be psychologically or physically ready.

L`Engle et al. (2006) found that teens perceiving the media to be supportive of teen sexual relationships reported more sexual activity.

Whilst there is less research on the impact of other sources of media compared to TV, it is clear that there is a reciprocal and reinforcing relationship between them.