Selective Exposure to Prestigious and Popular Media: Anticipated Taste Performances and Social Influences on Media Choice

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Benjamin K. Johnson, M.A.

Graduate Program in Communication

The Ohio State University

2014

Dissertation Committee:

Silvia Knobloch-Westrick, Advisor

David R. Ewoldsen

Daniel G. McDonald

Brandon Van Der Heide
Copyright by
Benjamin K. Johnson
2014
Abstract

The convergence of mass media and interpersonal media has brought enhanced opportunities for people to share media with each other. The ability to rate and recommend media, see what others are consuming and evaluating, and make public displays of personal tastes all suggest that social influences on the selection and use of media content are more important than ever. This study examines how social factors in new media environments impact selective exposure to media. Both the situational influence of impression management when sharing is anticipated as well as one’s willingness to comply with norms regarding media use are examined as possible explanations for selective exposure to media that is variably prestigious and popular. An experiment was conducted in which the anticipation of sharing a video with computer-mediated others was induced. Participants’ actual media use behavior was unobtrusively measured in the lab, to examine their selectivity toward videos on a website. The results indicated that indicators of prestige and popularity both had positive influences on selective exposure. Furthermore, anticipation of sharing one’s taste with others led to more viewing of highly popular videos and less viewing of moderately popular videos. Exposure to highly prestigious videos was greater when individuals had more positive attitudes toward sharing, but was lower when willingness to comply with norms was high. Moderating effects of need for cognition and enjoyment were found, which showed less exposure to moderately popular videos and more exposure to highly popular videos.
Dedication

This work is dedicated to the memories of Dorrel E. Byers and Michael J. Sullivan.
Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to acknowledge my advisor, Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick, for the immeasurable thanks that I owe her. She is spectacularly supportive, inspiring, and tireless as the mentor who has guided me through the many steps along this path of becoming a social scientist. The opportunity to study under a scholar who asks so many important questions and works so hard to answer them has been an amazing privilege. I aspire to be a bit more like her each day. Thank you, Silvia.

I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to my committee members, Dave Ewoldsen, Dan McDonald, and Brandon Van Der Heide. Each of them has been an unflagging promoter and tremendous role model for me. In their own distinctive ways, they each embody a blend of intellect, kindness, and humor that we all should strive to emulate.

I also wish to extend a great thank you to the brilliant faculty and students of the OSU School of Communication. You all have given me so much encouragement, and I am humbled by your daily excellence. Thank you to Aaron Kleespies, Rebecca Nelson, and Allison Koziel for diligent data collection for this dissertation project. Many thanks are also due to the mentors and peers I have had the honor of working with in Indianapolis, East Lansing, and Albany, GA who have fostered my academic path.

Most of all, I thank my wife, Bridget Johnson. Her constant love, support, and patience continually make me a better person, and our lifetime of adventures together brings me so much joy. I love you, and I thank you for being everything you are to me.
Vita

2005........................................ B.S. Communication, University of Indianapolis
2007........................................ M.A. Telecommunication, Information Studies, and Media, Michigan State University
2007 to 2010................................. Director/Instructor, Albany State University
2010 to present............................. Graduate Associate, School of Communication, The Ohio State University

Publications


Fields of Study

Major Field: Communication
# Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ ii

Dedication ................................................................................................................................... iii

Acknowledgments ......................................................................................................................... iv

Vita ................................................................................................................................................ v

List of Tables ................................................................................................................................. ix

List of Figures ............................................................................................................................... x

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview ....................................................................................... 1

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background ............................................................................................. 6

Chapter 3: Method ......................................................................................................................... 52

Chapter 4: Results ......................................................................................................................... 73

Chapter 5: Discussion .................................................................................................................... 84

References ..................................................................................................................................... 93

Appendix A: Tables ....................................................................................................................... 115

Appendix B: Figures ..................................................................................................................... 126

Appendix C: Video Ratings (Within-Subjects Stimuli) ................................................................. 134

Appendix D: Sources for Video Clips .......................................................................................... 135

Appendix E: Induction Scripts (Between-Subjects Stimuli) ......................................................... 136

Appendix F: Measures for Stimuli Pretests ................................................................................. 150

vii
List of Tables

Table A.1: Pretest 1 Results for Video Clip Stimuli ........................................ 115
Table A.2: Pretest 1 Results for Draft Experimental Inductions .................... 116
Table A.3: Pretest 1 Results for Draft Video Ratings .................................... 117
Table A.4: Pretest 2 Results for Revised Experimental Inductions ............... 118
Table A.5: Pretest 2 Results for Revised Video Ratings ............................. 119
Table A.6: Correlations Between Study Variables ....................................... 120
Table A.7: Selective Exposure Results for Nested Mixed Effects ANCOVA
Models ........................................................................................................ 121
Table A.8: Selective Exposure Mean Values for Nested Mixed Effects ANCOVA
Models ........................................................................................................ 122
Table A.9: Selective Exposure Results for Regression Models ...................... 123
Table A.10: Shared and Favorite Videos ...................................................... 124
Table A.11: Manipulation Check of Video Ratings ...................................... 125
List of Figures

Figure B.1: Example Overview Page from Study Website........................................ 126
Figure B.2: Example Video Page from Study Website........................................ 127
Figure B.3: Effects of Condition and Video Ratings on Selective Exposure,
With Controls........................................................................................................ 128
Figure B.4: Selective Exposure to Videos by Prestige, Over Time
(-Control Condition).............................................................................................. 129
Figure B.5: Selective Exposure to Videos by Prestige, Over Time
(Sharing Condition)............................................................................................. 130
Figure B.6: Selective Exposure to Videos by Popularity, Over Time
(Control Condition).............................................................................................. 131
Figure B.7: Selective Exposure to Videos by Popularity, Over Time
(Sharing Condition)............................................................................................. 132
Figure B.8: Effects of Condition and Video Ratings on Attitudes
Toward Videos....................................................................................................... 133
Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

In the context of selective exposure, relatively little attention has been given to the influence of social factors, compared recurrent interest in attitude consistency (e.g., Hart et al., 2008), the regulation of mood (e.g., Knobloch-Westerwick, 2006), and other intrapersonal influences (Hartmann, 2009b). Yet a handful of findings dating back to beginnings of communication research suggest that the social environment does impact what kinds of communication individuals are exposed to (e.g., Atkin, 1972; Dillmann Carpentier, 2009; Friedson, 1953; Johnstone & Katz, 1957; Smith, Fabrigar, Powell, & Estrada, 2007; Waples, Berelson, & Bradshaw, 1940). However, this area of research remains scattered and generally under-theorized.

Meanwhile, several notable developments in the nature of interpersonal communication online have allowed for an unprecedented ability for people to share their cultural (especially media) preferences with each other and make public display of their tastes (Liu, 2007). These changes in the computer-mediated communication environment suggest several possibilities for selective exposure research: that (a) social influences on selective exposure are possibly becoming more prevalent, (b) the computer-mediated spaces for sharing and talking about media may alter the ways in which social influence comes to bear on selectivity, and (c) computer-mediated spaces provide a convenient and realistic setting in which to conduct research regarding selective exposure and the social
context. Finally, the specific relationship between these online taste performances (Liu, 2007) and selective exposure that the present study investigation examines is that the anticipation of sharing and talking about media content will lead to selective exposure to media content that serves impression management goals.

The study tests the proposition that social influences affect selective exposure to entertainment media. To do so, it compares two theoretical perspectives—impression management (Goffman, 1959; Leary & Kowalski, 1990) and the integrated behavioral model (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Fishbein & Yzer, 2003; Montaño & Kasprzyk, 2008)—which generate competing predictions about how social influences could foster more exposure to mass communication along two socially relevant dimensions: the popularity and prestige of media content.

More specifically, this project examines how online taste performances (Liu, 2007), the sharing and display of preferences for media content and other cultural goods (Good, 2012; Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009), impact selective exposure to media. Particularly, the anticipation of sharing media content with others via social media platforms is predicted to influence what media content individuals consume. Drawing from sociological accounts of taste as well as relevant social psychological theories, two facets of media content—its popularity and its prestige—are expected to figure into which media is chosen when taste performances are anticipated.

Furthermore, the predictions derived from impression management are contrasted with rival predictions from the integrated behavioral model, which could also explain social influences that increase the likelihood of choosing popular or prestigious media.
Accordingly, individual differences in self-monitoring and willingness to comply with norms are proposed for each competing theoretical perspective. With regard to popularity of content, the experiment also incorporates optimal distinctiveness theory, to examine if linear or curvilinear popularity patterns are used for impression management purposes, and if individual differences in need for uniqueness moderate those patterns.

To accomplish these goals, the manuscript proceeds as follows. First, relevant theoretical perspectives and empirical findings are discussed in Chapter 2. The concept of selective exposure and the role it plays in the communication process is discussed, as well as the implications of the emerging media environment for selective exposure. A variety of research relative to social influences on selective exposure is discussed, and two key dimensions of media—prestige and popularity—are identified and situated with regard to relevant theory. Next, two overarching frameworks are presented for how social influences in the new media environment might drive selective exposure to media content that varies in its prestige and popularity. These models are online impression management and the integrated behavior model, and competing predictions are derived to predict and explain selective exposure patterns. Finally, the theoretical background concludes by considering relevant qualifications of these effects: namely the role of optimal distinctiveness in identity-driven impression management and conformity, and the role of individual differences such as self-monitoring and need for uniqueness in how people might respond situations in which they anticipated engaging in taste performances of their media consumption.
Next, Chapter 3 outlines the procedure and measures used in this selective exposure experience. It details the development and testing of stimuli for use in an experiment to test the hypotheses presented in Chapter 2. Documentary film clips were prepared for presentation in an experimental website employing the selective exposure paradigm (Knobloch-Westerwick, in press), which allows for unobtrusive behavioral measurement of real media use. The desired manipulations of anticipated sharing, prestige, and popularity were tested, revised, and re-tested to produce satisfactory experimental stimuli. The chapter then specifies the 2-session procedure used in the main experiment, including the measures used and the analytical approach necessary to test the hypotheses.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the experiment, in which 127 university students participated. Mixed effects ANOVAs and ANCOVAs are used to examine which videos were chosen and how long they were viewed for. A number of relevant covariates are accounted for, the rival predictors from the integrated behavioral model are employed, and individual differences are examined. Next, hierarchical multiple regression models are used to further explore the effects of attitudes and norms (per the integrated behavioral model) as well as two post-hoc moderators the emerged from the analyses. Additional post-hoc analyses explore the role of time in selective exposure effects, as well as other dependent variables such as sharing intentions and attitudes toward particular media. Chapter 5 discusses these various findings, and provides an inventory of limitations, future directions, and conclusions. Finally, the appendices present noteworthy
results in tables and figures, as well as the full set of stimuli and measures used in this study of social influences on selective exposure in the new media environment.
Chapter 2: Theoretical Background

Selective Exposure

Selective exposure refers to the phenomenon in which some communication messages are preferred by receivers over others, resulting a bias in which messages are ultimately received by individuals. The phenomenon and concept was identified by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1944) and was historically associated with confirmation bias in political communication, and with cognitive dissonance theory.

However, because there are many possible contributing factors to the selection and use of mediated communication, research examining selective exposure phenomena has since drawn from and developed a variety of theoretical backgrounds. Zillmann (2000) characterized cognitive dissonance, informational utility, and mood management as the dominant theoretical approaches in selective exposure research. Other approaches have been limited in scope or are of more recent vintage, yet suggest the potential for expanding the scope and refining the predictions for selective exposure. Researchers in the uses and gratifications paradigm have applied the theories of reasoned action and planned behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen & Madden, 1986), especially their value-expectancy approach to attitudes toward behaviors, to the selection of media messages (Hartmann, 2009a; Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985). Another more recent approach, especially in studying the appeal of video games, has been to apply self-
determination theory to selective exposure phenomena. Reineke et al. (2012), for example, have explored the possibility of merging SDT with a mood management approach. Other studies have sought to examine social identity concerns as factors in selective exposure (Knobloch-Westerwick & Alter, 2007; Knobloch-Westerwick, Appiah, & Alter, 2008; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2006, 2010).

All of these frameworks can be generalized as thinking about selective exposure as a very individualized and personal behavior, existing in something of a social vacuum. Scattered studies have considered the social influences on selective exposure, and are reviewed below. For example, early studies of informational utility (Canon, 1964; Freedman, 1965) as well as mood adjustment studies (Knobloch, 2003; Knobloch-Westerwick & Alter, 2006) are noteworthy for their use of anticipated social interaction to induce accuracy motivation in the former case and a social retaliation motivation in the latter. These research designs imagine a social context for selective exposure, even if they do not necessarily provide social explanations for selectivity. In part, the potential social influences on selective exposure are made more apparent and relevant because of changes in the media environment. Accordingly, the next section will examine the implications of new media for selective exposure, which will be followed by a section reviewing the extant work on social influences on selective exposure.

**New media and selective exposure.** Rather than determining social phenomena, technologies are tools that are often exploited by users to enhance or adjust existing social practices. However, technologies do have specific affordances that can enable or
challenge particular uses (Gibson, 1979), and various affordances of the Internet and related technologies have critical implications for selective exposure.

A modest number of studies have compared online and offline selectivity in media exposure. For example, Getzkow and Shapiro (2010) found that online news use was more selective (i.e., attitude-consistent) than offline news use, but less so than interpersonal discussion. Stroud (2008), on the other hand, found comparable effects for selectivity among Internet, cable news, and talk radio use, both over time and when incorporating numerous statistical controls (but less selectivity was evident in newspaper use).

However, beyond comparisons of different media, various aspects of new media potentially speak to the nature of selective exposure in the contemporary media environment. Several theoretical accounts and reviews have suggested technological features and affordances in newer forms of media that are variable and might modify various effects of communication. These variables include modality, agency, interactivity, and navigability (Sundar, 2008), selective self-presentation, idealized interpersonal relationships, control over message production, and mutual feedback mechanisms (Walther, 2010), interactivity, diversity of content, audience control and selectivity, personalization, media convergence, the structure or organization of information, and global reach (Metzger, 2009). A prospective inventory follows of features that are highly relevant to the intersection of new media and selective exposure.

One clear trend that has followed from introduction of newer media, especially the Internet, has been a proliferation in the quantity of communication being distributed,
and a corresponding growth in the types of content available to individuals. In addition to
an increase in the depth and breadth of mediated content, accessibility to content of all
kinds has increased. The inherently interconnected nature of the Internet, relatively open
standards and platforms, and a convergence among many devices and platforms (e.g.,
streaming video, mobile access to the web) have all contributed to a media environment
characterized by ease of access and ease of control.

These dual phenomena, message proliferation and ease of selection, sparked much
of the renewed interest in selective exposure to political media at the turn of the century
(Sunstein, 2001), as the ideologically-motivated are arguably presented with greater
opportunity to wall themselves off from contrary views and the apathetic are able to
avoid civic life and avoid anything other than pleasant diversions (Prior, 2007). Ease of
access to abundant information may be a double-edged sword that allows those with
more political efficacy to enhance their knowledge and capability while those with less
political efficacy will experience the reverse, a diminishment of what little political
interest and resources they held (Donsbach & Mothes, 2012).

With regard to other motives for selective exposure, the increased diversity and
accessibility of content online presumably allows for greater ability to individuals to
choose media content that meets their preferences. For example, web content that
facilitates mood management and social comparison is abundant (cf. Knobloch-
Westerwick & Hastall, 2010). The long tail of content available on the Internet
(Anderson, 2006) also increases the potential for content to be available that serves the
individual’s narrow particular identity, their specific informational and practical needs, or their momentary whims.

Beyond diversity and accessibility, however, other aspects of the contemporary media environment have yet to fully capture the imagination of research into communication exposure. A review of online news research by Mitchelstein & Boczkowski (2010) found that extant studies have assumed a qualitative difference between traditional and online media, yet, at least with regard to news, has not strayed far from existing theory and methods for examining online media use. This next section will outline additional implications of new media technologies for how communication exposure is selected by individuals, attempting to outline these possibilities and suggest elements needed for a model for studying selective exposure in the new media setting.

The Internet is characterized by the ability to search for content, which heightens access but also raises questions about how people search, how efficacious they are in searching, how issues like search engine optimization influence content and how it is accessed, and how the process of searching might impact selectivity and exposure. *Hypertextuality* is also a fundamental yet exceptional feature of Internet content, and one that is certainly under-examined with regard to information seeking and selective exposure. How does a network of content and the kinds of intertextuality exploited by content creators influence what is read, when, and for how long?

The various forms of *convergence* between media have implications for ease of access, as video or print content are made available online, forms and genres hybridize and combine in new ways, and content is widely “spread” across various media (Jenkins,
Ford, & Green, 2013). Perhaps even more important for the social aspect of selective exposure, new media have created an interface between mass media and interpersonal media (Walther, Carr, et al., 2010). This allows for interaction between and simultaneous use of these previously distinct forms of communication. The interplay between mass and interpersonal communication is vital to the two-step flow (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955), but new media enhance this relationship by placing them together in the same space and affording new kinds of interaction between mass and interpersonal.

The online environment also alters the role of time in the dissemination and consumption of media. Not only can information spread more quickly—no need to for publication or broadcast schedules—content can be accessed at a much later date, which allows for the possibility of a longer life cycle for content. The asynchrony of online media is also critical for time shifting, multitasking, and whether or not online behavior displaces other activities (cf. Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2010).

Next, new media technologies generally afford more interactivity with content, content creators, the delivery platform, and other users. Customization allows for de facto se via filtering (Pariser, 2011; Ladwig, Anderson, Brossard, Scheufele, & Shaw; Scheufele & Nisbet, 2012), what Mutz and Young (2011) call “passive selective exposure.” The interaction between filtering and choice (i.e., both de facto and personal selective exposure) may yield patterns of exposure worth examining, too. Social factors enter into filtering, too, with social gatekeepers and “curation.” Both recommending to others and following their suggestions can entail impression motives.
The rise of user-generated content (UGC) is one of the most fascinating and transformative aspects of the new media environment. It has created a whole new class of content creators, new forms of content, and truly blurred the boundaries between mass and interpersonal communication. However, selective exposure research has been slow to examine this content. Given the variety of user-generated content, it can be examined from a wide range of perspectives, from classic dissonance (Kushin & Kitchener, 2009) to social comparison (Johnson & Knobloch-Westerwick, 2013) and beyond.

Finally, one of the most intriguing aspects of the new media environment is the often public and transparent nature of the individual’s online behavior. The uses of the Internet are increasingly embedded in a social setting, where self-disclosure, identity maintenance, and effective social interaction become relevant concerns for the online self and many of its activities (Gross & Acquisiti, 2005; Tufekci, 2012). Web services and their advertisers need their users to share and talk (Burke, Marlow, & Lento, 2009), and users in the network benefit from the reciprocal sharing of content. But how does all this sharing and transparency influence behavior?

Litt (2012) suggests online users have become “performance-driven” (p. 330), in an age of networked conspicuous consumption. We can connect with like-minded others more easily, and we arguably are connected to others and their affinities more than ever before. The potential to see many others like us should shift many people’s optimal level of social identity distinctiveness towards more differentiation and less belonging.

In addition to the sharing and talking taking place in social media, technologies allow for lateral surveillance of peers, so that the individual does not always know who
their audience may be, yet they are highly aware of their peers and connections, leading to a generalized and imagined audience (Litt, 2012). The presence of others in the media environment has the possibility to increase homogeneity in exposure to information, yet it may also more exposure to diverse views (cf. Brundidge, 2010; Huckfeldt, Mendez, Osborn, 2004; Y. Kim, 2011; Knobloch-Westerwick & Johnson, 2014; Mutz & Young, 2011; Wojcieszak & Mutz, 2009), perhaps incidentally (Tewksbury, Weaver, & Maddex, 2001) through hypertextuality and intertextuality, or through weak ties in the network (Mutz & Young, 2011).

Being digitally connected with others influences the flow of all kinds of information. But furthermore, the mere presence of others influences our thoughts and behavior (Zajonc, 1965). Bowman, Weber, Tamborini, and Sherry (2013) examined how the physical presence of others affects interactive media use through increased arousal. This can be extended to the online presence of others (Lim & J. Lee, 2009; Weibel, Wissmath, Habegger, Steiner, & Groner, 2008).

Online, the presence of an audience is often complicated by the multiple audience problem, or “context collapse.” Hogan suggests that context collapse is characterized by “two groups: those for whom we seek to present an idealized front and those who may find this front problematic” (p. 383). This maps onto ideal/ought distinctions (cf. Milkman, 2012), yet Hogan expects this will lead to a least-common denominator UGC for a given site. The cross-pressures from different audiences will influence performances, but especially what Hogan calls exhibitions (recorded, persistent self-presentation) (cf. Herring, 1999).
The actual sharing of embedded media and hyperlinks also makes co-consumption possible, as with co-viewing, but is not a structural constraint per se, as use is asynchronous. That is not to say that others’ consumption is not an influence on whether one will choose something, but it moves from a structural to a psychological influence, compared to co-viewing. While the physical co-viewing of television has not increased 2003-2010, viewing alone has, as the number of screens has proliferated (McDonald & Johnson, 2013). Therefore, there is a greater opportunity and need for Internet-mediated social connectedness regarding television consumption, especially as television viewing is occurring on many of the same devices used to access the social web. Sharing mass media in social media allows for the recreation of the water cooler and other traditional social settings in which media were consumed and discussed.

Walther, Carr, et al. (2010) suggest that interpersonal goals could bias media choice, perhaps along the lines of instrumental, identity, and relational goals. Self-presentational concerns are increasingly likely to influence selective exposure, as media use is increasingly shared, discussed, curated, and generally made transparent through computer-mediated communication. For example, does the increased ability to signal identity with taste performances increase the value of some cultural goods (prestige media)? Can the desire to fit with our social network can lead us to try new things and suppress traditional biases like confirmation bias? (Messing & Westwood, in press; Scheufele & Nisbet, 2012).

Dramatic changes in our contemporary media ecology have exciting but poorly understood implications for selective exposure to communication. The explosion in the
diversity of and access to media has reignited interest in selective exposure research, but other facets of new media like the intersection of mass and interpersonal communication which heighten the potential consequences of public display of taste performances remain under-examined and under-theorized. In many cases, including taste performances, these practices and processes predate the Internet and have been long acknowledged, but did not fit in existing research paradigms or were too challenging to thoroughly document and test. Technological changes have made these phenomena more prominent, have potentially augmented how they occur, and provide new opportunities for observing and testing.

Finally, the effects of new technology on selective exposure have important implications for media effects. Social sharing of information online has implication for the classic two-step flow of communication. But while sharing certainly has the potential to influence others, it can affect the sharer, too. The public display of taste performances is likely to affect the self-concept and identity beyond the fact of exposure, adding another layer to reinforcing spirals framework of selectivity and social identity (Slater, 2007). The sharing of persuasive messages is likely to have a disproportionate effect on the sharer, and is a promising direction for examining health communication.

The simultaneous use of multiple media platforms also has implications for information processing (Stroud et al., 2011) as does the presence and influence of others in the space (Anderson, Brossard, Scheufele, Xenos, & Ladwig, in press; David, Cappella, & Fishbein, 2006; Walther, Carr, et al., 2010; Walther, DeAndrea, Kim, & Anthony, 2010). Discussion mediates information use and effects (Katz & Lazarsfeld,
but multitasking allows for computer-mediated discussion that could moderate effects, too. Walther, Carr, et al. (2010) point out that the temporal sequence is a critical question for information processing. For example, at what points in time does (or when can) the discussion or sharing in social utility occur, relative to media use? Also, discussion is likely to lead to more information seeking or media choice, not only after the fact through recommendations, but also in advance, for the purposes of being prepared to hold discussions with others. CMC makes simultaneous and asynchronous possible, where the sequence of mass media exposure and interpersonal was previously clear-cut.

The nature of selective exposure in the new (and constantly evolving) media environment presents great opportunity for the extension and development of theories regarding selective exposure, and has important implications for media effects that follow from that exposure. The social context of media use is one of these promising avenues, and is poised to yield exciting findings.

**Social influences on media use.** Communication researchers who have turned their attention to why and how the mass media are used by individuals have identified and studied a wide range of motives for, and gratifications that result from, media use (Hartmann, 2009b; Knobloch-Westerwick, in press; Rubin, 2009; Zillmann & Bryant, 1985). Often included in these inventories of media gratifications are social gratifications. However, while findings about social implications often pop up and have long been acknowledged, there has been little effort to explain why media use provides social gratifications. Most work has been content to conclude that media content gives
people “something to talk about” (e.g., Atkin, 1972) for its own sake (Bogart, 1955). While that is useful, it stops short of explaining why, other than for its own sake (i.e., to fill time or merely have something to say). While it is fairly evident that at least one implication of this talk is to interpersonally mediate or moderate the influence of mass communication on others (Hardy & Scheufule, 2005; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955; Southwell & Yzer, 2007, 2009), it’s far less evident why people talk about and share media in the first place, or what bearing this kind of talk has on selectivity in media choice (although appears to—Atkin, 1972; Chaffee & McLeod, 1973). This essay suggests that prestige is a valuable concept in explaining why media is shared interpersonally, and how anticipated sharing and talking impact selective exposure over time.

More recently, Buis et al. (2004) conducted a selective exposure study in which the type of anticipated social interaction was experimentally varied (competitive, cooperative, or solo). The results suggest an interaction with respondent sex, where men were more attentive to task-relevant content in the solo condition, and women were more attentive in the cooperative condition. Dillman Carpentier (2009) demonstrated a similar effect by priming social goals before a media exposure task. The social prime increased knowledge acquisition and perceived attention to the relevant content. Smith, Powell, and Estrada (2007) found that inducing a motivation to express one’s values led participants to engage in more attitude-consistent selective exposure. Kastenmüller, Jonas, Fischer, Frey, and Fischer (2013) examined audience confirmation bias and found that participants tasked with sharing information with a supervisor delivered information in
keeping with the perceived audience confirmation bias when an impression motive was present. When an accuracy motive was induced, the participants ignored audience expectations.

If media use offers social utility, what kinds of gratifications does that entail, and for what reasons is certain media content selected? Waples, Berelson, and Bradshaw (1940) drew on a wide range of anecdotal and early empirical results to offer a broad review of “what reading does to people.” In addition to the effects of reading books, magazines, newspaper, and other print media, they identified various reasons why people might read (or choose to read certain texts). Their topology ultimately conceptualized five effects of (which also include motives for) reading: the instrumental, prestige, reinforcement, aesthetic, and respite effects. We can recognize the instrumental, reinforcement, and respite effects as forerunners of selective exposure research’s triumvirate of informational utility, confirmation bias, and mood management (cf. Zillmann, 2000). Prestige and aesthetics, on the other hand, do not map onto current thinking about selective exposure. They characterize aesthetic effects as the appreciation of texts and their quality. This is arguably related to recent interest in appreciation as a non-hedonic audience response (Oliver & Bartsch, 2010). Aesthetics are also intimately connected to the nature of prestige, as theorized by Bourdieu (1979/1984) and discussed below. For prestige, Waples et al. (1940) suggest, on the basis of anecdotal evidence, that it is a motivating factor in, and one outcome of, reading. For example, they suggest with regard to this prestige motive that

[another expression of the motive leads to the reading of “good” or “new” or “best” books. The readers seek intrapersonal prestige by “self-improvement,” by
“keeping up with the latest titles,” or by “reading what the critics recommend.” They also usually anticipate praise from employers or teachers or associates because they have read such books. An example is the boy who made a valiant attempt to read The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire because a relative was sure he could not read it. A common reason for avoiding the pulp magazines lies in the stigma attached to those who read them. Prestige readers may be distinguished from other readers of “good” books because they read few books by the same distinguished author, they select the better-known titles and resist the often stronger attractions of unknown or unfashionable titles, and they pay less attention to the content. (p. 94)

However, subsequent researchers neglected Waples et al.’s proposed prestige effect of reading (and, by extension, other forms of media use). Prestige and aesthetics remained unexamined with accounts of media selection and use.

Communication researchers did not fully ignore the social aspects of media use, though. Friedson (1953) examined the media preferences of a modest sample of working-class, male children (in grades K, 2, 4, and 6). He first observed that specific media (television, movies, and comics) were overwhelmingly reported as being consumed in particular social settings (with family, peers, and alone, respectively). From there, Friedson used the development differences in reported preferences among social settings for media use (i.e., younger children preferred family settings, older children preferred being alone or with peers) to demonstrate that preferences in social settings, as well as inherent interest in content, appeared to influence preferences for different media at different ages.

Bogart (1955) interviewed male newspaper readers in New York and found that comic strips were commonly discussed inside and outside of the home, especially among the more educated (73% vs. 53%). Over a third of his 121 subjects reported having “gone to some trouble to find out what had been happening in their favorite comic strips” if they
had missed the paper a day or more (p. 28). The nature of the interpersonal discussion was typically humorous and incidental. Critically, comic strips served as a lingua franca at the time because newspapers (and the comic strips) were so widely read.

Johnstone and Katz (1957) compared music preferences among adolescent female acquaintances based on the strength on their social ties. Strength of friendship was associated with more overlap in musical tastes (preferences for genres, disc jockeys, and hit songs). The authors were not able to establish causal direction. However, while shared genre preferences are likely to influence friendship, the ephemeral nature of favored DJs and songs are more likely to follow from friendship than the reverse (although the relationship could still be attributable to a third variable). The relationship between friendship and taste was also suggested by between-neighborhood differences in preferences for happy versus sad love songs. Furthermore, there were differences in taste conformity (love song preferences among girls in the neighborhood with higher socioeconomic status showed less conformity to tastes of the most popular girls), suggesting that social influence was at work in taste formation.

Taking a cue from these earlier investigations, as well as the finding that social factors had been observed to account for greater variance in news use than intrapersonal factors (Chaffee & McLeod, 1973), Atkin (1972) suggested that the anticipation of talking about news would lead to information seeking. He demonstrated that the expectation of a future group discussion on a particular frame of reference (national, local, or institutional news) shaped self-reported information seeking behaviors in the
interim. This suggests that anticipated talk (or sharing/display, which are beyond the scope of Atkin’s model) figure into the social influence on media use and its selectivity.

Building on the expectancy-value approach of media use offered by Palmgreen and Rayburn (1985), Babrow (1989) examined whether subjective norms, like attitudes, would predict media use behavior (in this case, college students viewing soap operas). He also asked about “role appropriateness” for viewing, and relevance of viewing to the self-concept. Only self-concept emerged as a relevant predictor (compared to norm beliefs and role beliefs), but it outperformed attitudes towards soaps in predicting exposure.

Furthermore, the observation of television viewing in groups (Webster & Wakshlag, 1982) and families (Lull, 1982) further demonstrates the role of social relationships and norms in coviewing situations (McDonald, 2009), hearkening back to Friedson’s findings (1953).

Other researchers have in fact distinguished between “socializing” vs. “status-seeking” gratifications (C. Lee & Ma, 2012). These authors found that these motivations were distinct and each contributed to intentions to share news in social media (along with information seeking needs and prior sharing experience). Status seeking was also associated with previous (i.e., habitual) news sharing (in contrast to information seeking).

All of these summarized studies provide hints that belonging and conformity, but also the agency and ability of the individual to engage in successful interaction and self-presentation, are aspects of media use in the social environment.

Other results from marketing and consumer behavior research point in this same general direction, and provide some more clarity in what mechanism might be at play in
the social use of media. The work of Berger and colleagues (e.g., Berger & Heath, 2007) demonstrates that consumer goods (including media) are driven by a need for distinctiveness when the good has the potential to signal identity (which is true for media—see section on impression formation below). Accordingly, consumers will gravitate toward less popular items in identity-signaling product domains (e.g., music, hairstyles, sitcoms, jackets, cars) compared to functional products where popularity is a signal of quality rather than taste (e.g., soap, toothpaste, power tools, stereos). Yet they also wish to affiliate with their relevant social groups, so that they might choose a jacket style popular with their peers, but choose a unique color. The prefer goods that are indicative of their self-concept and social location. Furthermore, they will abandon existing tastes that a majority comes to adopt (Berger & Heath, 2007). Berger’s findings are consistent not only with a need for uniqueness (C. Snyder & Fromkin, 1980), but also with optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) which posits that humans are driven to identify with moderately-sized social groups, reconciling the need to belong and the need to individuate.

Likewise, analysis of online taste performances (e.g., lists of favorite musicians, films, books, and television programs) by Liu (2007) suggests that while an individual’s tastes performances were internally coherent and reflected social-level factors like education and religion (cf. Kosinski, Stillwell, Graepel, in press), they were statistically distinct from those of their peers listed in their MySpace “Top 8 Friends,” suggesting a motivated process of differentiation where unique preferences were cultivated or listed to make the individual stand apart. Other findings show that public scrutiny encourages
more “variety-seeking” in consumer behavior (Ratner & Kahn, 2002) and less interest in
traditional genres (Finnäs, 1989) than does private consumption.

Given scattered findings that social influence in terms of praise versus stigma,
social competence via shared knowledge, constraints due to social contexts of use,
membership in an optimally-sized groups, norms and conformity, and a unique, varied,
differentiated self-concept all suggest their influence on selective exposure, how can we
summarize and synthesize these social factors? The concept of *prestige* might allow for
this. What exactly is prestige and is it but one factor in an array of social factors that can
bear on choice, or is prestige potentially a unifying concept and framework?

Literature on prestige as a concept is generally lacking. In a marketing setting,
Vigneron and Johnson (1999) reviewed literature regarding consumers’ conspicuous
consumption, luxury, prestige perceptions, and related concepts, drawn from a variety of
theorists and researchers. They identified what they saw as five distinct subdimensions,
combined into two superordinant dimensions. These are conspicuousness, uniqueness,
and social value (which form an “interpersonal” dimension) and emotional value and
quality (which form a “personal” dimension). The interpersonal dimension of a good’s
prestige allows the individual to show it off (conspicuous), be non-conformist (unique),
and conform (social value). As indicated above in the discussion of optimal
distinctiveness, individuals wish to conform to some groups but not others, and to be
relatively unique within the bounds of fitting in with their reference group(s).

The other two dimensions of prestige explicated by Vigneron and Johnson (1999)
are emotional value (which allows for self-actualization, in their formulation) and quality
(which provides assurance to the consumer). These connections seem more tenuous, and may appear less relevant to the social uses and impression management function of prestige goods. However, their inclusion of quality and emotional value has some merit, as Bourdieu (1979/1984) argues that cultural beliefs about aesthetics are entirely grounded in social structure. For example, those with more cultural capital tend to prefer artistic expressions that are less functional. This is a signal that function is not needed because of an abundance of resources (cf. Zahavi, 1975), rather than any true or “pure” (i.e., Kantian) aesthetic that is grounded in the inherent nature of the art. Rather, beliefs about quality and aesthetic are entirely the result of social conventions, which are self-reproducing myths necessary to maintain a system of symbolic display of the consumption of cultural resources (Bourdieu, 1979/1984). In this way, perceptions of emotional value and quality may be latent or more indirect indicators of social value. Furthermore, what is seen as hedonic or of greater quality will be tied to social constructs and informed by relevant social identities.

This conceptualization of prestige does seem to capture the known concerns of social media use. Being able to talk to others about media content, or simply bond over shared appreciation and shared consumption, speaks to the social value (Atkin, 1972; Bogart, 1955). Furthermore, conformity to social expectations is evident (e.g., Johnstone & Katz, 1957). Clearly there is also a uniqueness motive as demonstrated by Berger and Heath (2007) and Liu (2007), though less apparent in any classic communication studies. The conspicuousness of media use is implicit in the role of interpersonal interaction (e.g., Atkin, 1972; Bogart, 1955), as well as explicitly seen in the differences in preferences
when choices are made public versus private (Lewis, Kaufman, & Christakis, 2008; Ratner & Kahn, 2002). For the two personal dimensions of quality and emotional value, Babrow’s role of the self-concept in normative influences (1989) might be most relevant. Impression management is also about the construction and maintenance of the self-concept (Baumeister, 1998; Tice, 1992). These “personal” aspects of prestige are perhaps internalized aspects of prestige’s social function and latent indicators of whether a particular cultural good is a fit with social goals.

If the motivation to select more prestigious media content is driven by actual interpersonal rewards and risks, there should be some evidence of these (dis)incentives in action. Indeed, a series of studies have documented that the impression formation process can readily make use of media choice in person perception. Zillmann and Bhatia demonstrated how prospective romantic partners are evaluated by their taste in different musical genres, while Zillmann, Weaver, Mundorf, and Aust showed that stereotype-congruent opposite-sex responses to a horror film was associated with greater romantic appeal. Likewise, stereotype-congruent tastes expressed by potential peers were associated with more positive evaluations and more interest in friendship. Hall (2007) identified film, television, and music genres that were connected to positive (e.g., comedy, sports, jazz, R&B) and negative (e.g., anime, soaps, bluegrass, techno) evaluations of prospective roommates; Rentfrow and Gosling (2006) found that music tastes alone allowed observers to deduce others’ personalities; and Lewis, Gonzalez, and Kaufman (2012) tracked a cohort of college students and concluded that establishing
friendships based on shared taste was a stronger effect that changing tastes based on friendships.

Therefore, the impressions formed and, presumably, subsequent behavior towards individuals expressing their media preferences is a major social consequence of what we have identified as the prestige function of media use. Individuals who have formed impressions of others based on media use (which seems to be a prevalent and robust phenomenon) or been made aware of their own impressions due to media use should be sensitized to the signaling potential of their media choices. Indeed, optimal distinctiveness in self-presentation is useful because it provides meaningful cues.

An example of internationalization of prestige is Milkman’s studies of Netflix queues (Milkman, Rogers, & Bazerman, 2009). Users of the video delivery/streaming site are far more likely to put prestigious (i.e., highbrow) films in their queue than they are to watch them. Netflix queues are currently private (but a legal challenge just opened to door for them to become socially-enabled on the web), so this behavior reflects an intrapersonal desire to increase the viewing of prestigious films. The discrepancy in queuing and watching is due to a gap between shoulds and wants (Milkman, 2012). While the need to consume socially rewarding fare is internalized, that does not mean it is only perceived; social rewards will materialize, and the internalization might be a response to anticipated discussion (talking about the film) or anticipated sharing (telling others online or at the water cooler that one has watched it). This also speaks to whether individuals adjust their behavior (especially online, where peer surveillance can exist in a
panopticon design) because of a real, present audience, or because of an imagined audience (cf. Litt, 2012; Marwick & boyd, 2011).

For example, we would expect the taste performances of others to influence taste preferences. The behavior of others is a critical input into the individual’s own beliefs and actions (cf. Bandura, 1986). Behavior that is displayed and recommended by others is likely to be embraced by the individual, especially when those others are valued and there is a willingness to adhere to norms (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The intransitive tendency toward conformity in opinion and behavior is one of the most ubiquitous findings in social psychology (e.g., Asch, 1948; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Festinger, 1954; Sherif, 1935). Furthermore, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) identified the power of interpersonal talk in the transmission of disseminating information from the mass media, influencing beliefs and preferences within social networks. More recently, methodological advances and increased interest has brought much attention to social network analysis. A number of studies in that area suggest the power of computer-mediated communication in online social networks to influence cultural, political, and other preferences, including preferences for media content.

A large-scale experiment using previously unheard songs demonstrated that bandwagon effects drove downloads over time, regardless of song quality (Salganik, Dodds, & Watts, 2006). Within randomly assigned groups, early advantages in numbers downloaded predicted later popularity. Similar findings have shown that high popularity (or in some cases, moderately high but not overly popular) ratings lead to increased selective exposure to news stories (Knobloch-Westerwick, Sharma, Hansen, & Alter,
2005; Messing & Westwood, in press). Fu (2012) examined view counts on a video website, and demonstrated that a bandwagon effect was at work. View counts presented for individual videos were strong predictors of subsequent viewing, indicating that viewers preferred highly-viewed videos, everything else being equal. Webster (2010) suggests that the available of these “user information regimes” offer cues about other’s consumption of media that have the potential to influence patterns in selective exposure (e.g., fragmentation and polarization).

In contrast, Lewis, Gonzalez, and Kaufman (2012) analyzed 4 years of panel data from a cohort of college students who used a particular SNS. They found more support for taste leading to social ties than for the reverse. Only appreciation of classical and jazz music appeared to diffuse through the network, whereas affinities for music and movies (but not books) drove social bonding over time. While this does reflect the conversion of cultural capital into social capital (Bourdieu, 1979/1984), more social influence might be expected with regard to tastes, as people must acquire or at least enhance their existing cultural capital in the first place. Lewis et al. (2012) also found that highly popular or hit content was unlikely to foster interpersonal connections, whereas more distinct tastes led to social bonding.

Despite Lewis et al.’s pessimistic findings regarding the influence of recommendations, Aral and Walker (2012) demonstrated the spread of influence in a social network by examining the influence and susceptibility of dyad members by their age, sex, and relationship status. They found significant differences among groups in their adoption of a movie-rating application on Facebook, and concluded that an
individual’s likelihood of being influential or susceptible is orthogonal. Using computer simulations of interpersonal influence, Watts and Dodds (2007) found that susceptibility to influence was the most critical factor in diffusion through a network.

Finally, it is important to keep the presence and persistence of external influence and norms (and importance of being receptive to influence) in mind as we examine the other relationships between taste performances and preferences, which all involve the individual’s public display of their own taste performances.

**Popularity and Prestige**

When engaging in online taste performances (Liu, 2007) and selecting consumer goods that are perceived as having identity-signaling potential (Berger & Heath, 2008), individuals try to strike a balance between belonging and individuality (Chan, Berger, & Van Boven, 2012). One way in which this manifests could be in selecting optimally distinct (cf. Brewer, 1991) consumer goods such as media content. However, another way in which individuality is signaled is through *prestige*. Prestige refers to the status associated with a cultural good, and prestige is often denoted by approval from cultural experts in contrast to mass approval (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999).

Prestige also relates to belonging, as it reflects association and membership in desirable social groups. People may leave existing social in-groups for other more desirable social groups (Brewer, Manzi, & Shaw, 1993; Nesdale & Flessor, 2001). Similarly, not only will be people seek affiliation with an in-group through taste, but they also employ taste to acquire and display their cultural capital, which can facilitate upward social mobility and affiliation with aspirational groups (Bourdieu, 1979/1984). Media
users aspire to have more highbrow or otherwise culturally-approved media use, even when it conflicts with their attitudes and more hedonically-driven media use motivations (Milkman, Rogers, & Bazerman, 2009) and they are able to exercise more highbrow choices when their self-regulation resources are strong (Milkman, 2012).

Vigneron and Johnson (1999) reviewed the conceptual and empirical evidence in the consumer research literature regarding prestige. Based on their review, they identified five dimensions of prestige: perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, perceived social value, perceived emotional value, and perceived quality value. Respectively, these dimensions reflect a conceptualization of prestige in which the consumer is (a) distinguished through display, (b) distinct from undesired social groups, (c) conforming to desired social groups, (d) self-actualized and thus able to focus on aesthetic form over function, and (e) able to acquire to relatively better, or near-perfect, goods. From their explication, Vigneron and Johnson (2004) developed and validated the 20-item brand luxury inventory (BLI), which measures the five dimensions of prestige with 7-point semantic differential scales that distinguish between moderate and high levels of prestige (e.g., 1 = uncommon to 7 = rare, and 1 = better to 7 = superior).

Other measures have been developed to capture the notion of perceived popularity, especially in the diffusion of innovations and technological adoption model literature (Chang, Lee, & Kim, 2006; Mishra, Umesh, & Stem, 1993; Zhu & He, 2002). These measures typically employ reference groups ranging from small in-groups to mass publics, and in this they resemble commonly-used measures of subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011).
Similarly, Kim, Park, and Park (2013) found independent effects for word-of-mouth (i.e., popularity, $b^* = .59$) and critic reviews (i.e., prestige, $b^* = .13$) on box office sales in the U.S. for study year 2008 ($\Delta R^2$ for word-of-mouth and reviews = .24). Given that it is cultural prescribed, prestige reflects should beliefs (Milkman, 2012), i.e., injunctive norms. Popularity, on the other hand, is by definition a descriptive norm.

Therefore, popularity and prestige can be conceptualized as distinct characteristics of media content, both of which have potential to impact selective exposure.

H1a: Online media users spend more time with more prestigious media.

H1b: Online media users spend more time with more popular media.

H1c: The effect in H1b is stronger when media is more prestigious.

**Online Impression Management**

Many types of disclosure of information about the self occur in computer-mediated communication (Joinson & Paine, 2007). Sharing is especially vital to the very existence of user-driven, networked forms of CMC like social networking sites (Burke, Marlow, & Lento, 2009). One type of disclosure that is very prevalent in these media is the taste performance, in which the end user shares their cultural proclivities with other users as part of their profile (Liu, 2007) or in a posting or message. A large proportion of the tastes conveyed in these performances are preferences for other media content, including mass media fare (Liu, 2007; Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009; Schau & Gilly, 2003).

What effects do these taste performances have on actual preferences for exposure to media content? This essay will articulate several proposed relationships between taste
performances and taste preferences. There are a variety of possible ways in which taste performances can come to bear influence on preferences, but special emphasis will be placed on *anticipated sharing* as an influence. In addition, the nature of taste performances will be taken into consideration, as they can vary from formation of lists (Liu, 2007) to embedded display of media (Messing & Westwood, in press) to talking about the content itself (Atkin, 1972).

One process by which the individual’s own taste performances may come to influence their preferences over time is through public commitment. Cognitive dissonance research has shown that making decisions and expressing preferences publically leads to a strengthening of attitudes (Brehm, 1956). Likewise, Tice suggested that the power of the looking-glass self (Cooley, 1902) allowed impression management to influence the individual’s own self-concept. This notion has been extended to computer-mediated communication, where public online performance of extraversion or introversion has been found to shift the self-concept, whereas private online performance did not (Gonzales & Hancock, 2008; Walther et al., 2011; cf. Zhao, 2005).

Additionally, Lewis, Kaufman, and Christakis (2008) found differences in taste performances between public and private SNS profiles. For example, listing classical music as a musical preference, a status-enhancing display, was more common among public profiles. Similarly, some distinct clusters of tastes emerged for public and private profiles. Lewis et al. suggest this may be attributable to an underlying trait, which manifests a “taste for privacy” in addition to cultural tastes.
Given the demands of impression management and the value of effective taste performances, people will certainly exercise selectively in the display of their tastes. Affordances like asynchrony and editing allow for very selective self-presentation in many computer-mediated settings (Walther, 2007; Yun & Park, 2011). Classic research suggests this is also true offline, were people display existing preferences more prominently when they are advantageous (basking in reflected glory; Cialdini et al., 1976). Walther, Carr, et al. (2010) suggest this BIRGing effect will be heightened in CMC, owing to ability to selectively craft impressions (Walther, 1996). However, pressure to share, as well as technologies of peer surveillance may shift the selectivity from display to use (as described in the next section).

Accordingly, the motives for exposure to and sharing of media content appear to differ. For example, Boczkowski and Mitchelstein (2012) found distinct thematic differences in what online news stories were read, shared, and commented on. Hanson and Haridakis (2008), in a study of viewing and sharing clips comedy news (e.g., The Daily Show or late-night monologues) and traditional news (e.g., cable, network, or local news program) on YouTube, found that as might be expected, entertainment motives were associated with comedy news views and information-seeking motives were associated with traditional news views. However, with regard to sharing, only entertainment motives were connected to comedy news sharing; information-seeking motives did not influence traditional news sharing. However, sharing both kinds of content were driven by an “interpersonal expression” motivation (e.g., “To belong to a group with the same interests as mine,” “To participate in discussions,” and “To give my
input,” among other items). Hanson and Haridakis also examined “companionship” as a motive for sharing and found no effects (albeit with only two items, $r = .74$). This suggests that sharing is not merely a by-product of consumption, but has motives of its own.

Individuals are no doubt selective in what they share, as they are aware that tastes are useful for making impressions of others. Studies by Zillmann and Bhatia (1989), Hall (2007), and Rentfrow and Gosling (2006) have all found that information about others’ taste preferences are used in interpersonal perception.

Fieldwork by Turkle (2011, p. 185) demonstrates the self-presentational concerns and anxieties associated with online taste performances. While these anxieties certainly will result in selective self-presentation, their strong connection to identity and the self suggest that that these impression management concerns will go so far as to influence media preferences. Indeed, given the prevalence of sharing media online, people may consume media with anticipated taste performances in mind. Put differently, while selective self-presentation is an act of impression construction, the anticipation of a scenario that will require effective self-presentation to meet social expectations or achieve identity goals is characterized as impression motivation. This motivation can come to bear on behavior before or during social situations, in a conscious or subconscious manner (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

The need to employ tastes as impression management cues without being overly selective (i.e., retaining some authenticity; Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006), taken with the ability of impression management to influence subsequent preferences and the impact of
recommendations and norms on preferences, all suggest that selective exposure to media content might shift in *anticipation* of impression management.

Atkin (1972) made a similar argument with regard to the social, or communicatory, utility of news for discussion. He demonstrated with an experiment that the expectation of future discussion regarding a particular topic was associated with greater information seeking about that topic in the interim. Survey data also supported the hypothesis that anticipated discussion would foster information seeking and the selection of relevant media content.

The potentially public nature of media consumption, through several anticipated forms of sharing (see next section) has the potential to drive selective exposure toward choices that enhance impression management goals. However, evidence is scarce for this claim, and for the idea in general that anticipated self-presentation influences behavior.

A qualitative study (Silfverberg, Liikkanen, & Lampinen, 2011) using in-depth interviews with 12 users of Last.fm found that awareness of the public display of their profiles led them to regulate their music listening and to attempts to game the service (for example by switching the automated tracking off during certain songs, by letting other songs play on mute even while not listening, and by periodically deleting their listening history).

Using an assortment of 5 to 10 snacks as consumption choices, and scrutiny by participants’ classmates as a public manipulation, Ratner and Kahn (2002) demonstrated that public consumption was associated with greater variety-seeking. Furthermore, this effect was moderated by self-monitoring, and was suppressed when participants were
primed to choose their favorites (therefore bypassing self-presentational concerns).

Similarly, Morgan, Lampe, and Shafiq (2013) found that the more news stories an individual shared on Twitter, the more likely they were to share diverse sources.

Additionally, a handful of selective exposure studies have induced anticipated social interaction as a means for testing whether a social prime would influence selectivity (Dillman Carpentier, 2009), whether interaction would heighten the need for accuracy (Canon, 1964; Kastenmüller, Jonas, Fischer, Frey, & Fischer, 2013; Freedman, 1965; Smith, Powell, & Estrada, 2007), and whether interaction would facilitate mood adjustment (Knobloch, 2003; Knobloch-Westerick & Alter, 2006).

Why media? First of all, it is a fascinating intersection of mass media and interpersonal media. Furthermore, mass media (including some forms of user-generated content, e.g., viral images or photos) signify identity and are a consumable text beyond the text through which they are shared. They are external to the individual and serve a larger audience of which the individual is a part. Online media content is also a non-rivalrous good, which facilitates sharing, and it is possible to talk about media content in ways beyond other consumer goods. With regard to sharing, not only can individuals display and discuss their preferences online, they are also able to share content for consumption. This might influence impression formation when the cue is so rich and can be consumed and evaluated immediately.

Specifically, there are four ways in which taste performances may occur. The self-presenter may state that a preference exists (e.g., creating lists or profiles, or making a statement to the effect); they may share the content through embedded media or a link;
they may discuss the content or employ allusions; and they may be subject to surveillance through technologies like “frictionless sharing” or Last.fm’s “scrobbling.” Research should explore how these different modes of presentation influence the behavior and decision making of both those engaged in impression management and those engaged in impression formation.

It is not clear that the public nature of many online settings is always salient to users, or that when it is, that it influences behavior in the same way as physical publicness. For example, some authors (e.g., Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Humphreys, 2011) have suggested that users are relatively unconcerned about privacy online and either allow the public and private to blur or do not take the public nature of online behavior seriously. Yet a review by Tufekci (2012) of research into SNS privacy practices by younger users concluded that these groups are concerned with privacy and proactively utilize privacy controls. Likewise, Tufekci’s own research (2008), along with that of Christofides, Muise, and Desmarais (2009), finds that privacy and self-disclosure are orthogonal, as individuals utilize technological affordances to control their privacy rather than restrict their disclosure based on privacy needs. But does the awareness of surveillance by an online audience influence behavior? The public commitment paradigm would suggest that it does, as does work on the *imagined audience*.

To the extent that computer-mediated communication consists of direct interaction with others, or includes any feedback, there is a real audience that the individual can perceive. However, the persistence of online communications, and the ability of others to lurk or surveille, should. Furthermore, social psychology suggests that
humans tend to generalize an imagined audience even when their behavior is private (Baldwin & Holmes, 1987; Fridlund, 1991).

With regard to a real audience in CMC, Litt (2012) points out that system- and audience-generated “presence cues” (p. 337) can provide information about who the audience is and who is paying attention. Comments and feedback, friend display and count, or activity in one’s own newsfeed are all examples of cues (or sets of cues) that can provide information about the audience or at least make certain members, segments, or aspects of the audience more salient. Furthermore, she points out that online platforms will vary in their affordances for which cues are made available or emphasized (Litt, 2012).

We may be mistaken about who is in our audience because these cues bias our perceptions, or because of filtering we don’t anticipate (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Litt, 2012; Pariser, 2011). Alternatively, social media increasingly allow message targeting, provided users are willing to expend the effort (Tufekci, 2012).

On the user end, Litt (2012) distinguishes between three factors that influence imaginings of the audience for social media users: motivations toward social media use, motivations to engage in socially acceptable behavior, and technological proficiency. These roughly map onto the determinants of behavioral intentions in the theory of planned behavior: attitudes, norms, and self-efficacy. Performance behavior in computer-mediated communication is closely connected to perceptions of the mediated interpersonal audience.
Hogan (2010) offered an alternative explanation of Lewis et al.’s (2008) findings regarding cultural tastes and privacy. Rather than people with an affinity for certain types of status-enhancing content (viz., diverse yet coherent and relatively obscure tastes) having a greater propensity toward making those tastes visible, Hogan suggests that those with public profiles are more likely to cultivate taste performances, compared to private profile holders, who will by virtue of holding a private profile will subsequently be “indifferent to the association of taste and identity” (2012, p. 380).

A survey by Jung, Song, and Vorderer (2012) showed a positive link between impression management concerns and the frequency of both posting messages and reading messages on the Korean SNS Cyworld. They interpret the positive relationship between impression management and reading other’s posts as attributable to either (a) learning what the SNS audience is interested in, or (b) gathering feedback in the form of comments on one’s on posts. Both possibilities speak to the imagined audience, and require more nuanced measures of what users are reading on SNSs and other social media. Jung et al. (2012) also found support for their prediction that trait social comparison tendency would drive impression management and surveillance of others, which mediated a relationship between social comparison and reading messages. This hints at a third explanation for their findings, that reading what others post is critical to making social comparisons and subsequently being able to engage in effective and differentiated self-presentation.

Barasch and Berger (2013) found that audience size influenced what kind of information participants were willing to share about themselves via email (Studies 1 and
3a) or face-to-face (Study 2). Expectations of large audiences (“a group of friends”) led to sharing self-enhancing information (downplaying negativity), while small audiences (“one friend”) led to sharing the most relevant and useful information for the interpersonal partner(s). The authors did not manipulate publicness, but found no moderating effect of perceived publicness.

Media consumers do seem to internalize the expectations of others, even when an audience is not apparent. Milkman, Rogers, and Bazerman (2009) found that Netflix users often added highbrow films to their queues for viewing than they were really interested in watching. Subsequent work by Milkman (2012) suggests that this is attributable to what individuals believe they should watch versus what they want to watch. This internalization of norms suggests that the imagined audience is powerful, and that the acquisition and display of cultural capital may be just as important for the self-concept as it is for self-presentation to others.

Finally, a critical consideration for the individual’s behavior in response to the computer-mediated audience is the presence and nature of feedback (Walther, 1996). Building on the work of Tice (1992) and Gonzales and Hancock (2008) that shows how public self-presentation can lead to correspondent shifts in identity, Walther et al. (2011) demonstrated that positive feedback can heighten this effect. Feedback is likely to play a critical role in sharing and discussing media content, as it provides insight into the audience and guides the individual towards taste performances that will allow them to meet their social goals.
This review points to some of the ways in which computer-mediated taste performances might influence selective exposure to media. Anticipated sharing, discussion, and surveillance are especially fascinating, as they suggest that the demands of the mediated interpersonal environment might influence taste preferences. Empirical research is needed to examine whether this kind of anticipation of taste performances does influence selectivity and what conditions (such as technological affordances of sharing) influence the extent of the phenomenon.

**Impression management and anticipated future interaction.** If the taste performances of online media content sharing serve an impression management function (Liu, 2007), individuals will tend to share media that best serves their impression management goals, as impression management motivations will influence media use behavior (cf. Boczkowski & Mitchelstein, 2012). While people can engage in a selective manipulation of what they share, they need to share authentically and to share competently to be effective impression managers (cf. Doherty & Schlenker, 1991; Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006). This difference is captured by the theoretical distinction between impression motivation and impression construction (Leary & Kowalski, 1990); the latter entails selective sharing, the former entails behavior that is impression-motivated. Given that sharing is consequent to the consumption of the same information good that is shared, impression construction (the selective self-editing of displayed behavior) will manifest as selective sharing, whereas impression motivation can manifest prior to sharing, as media consumption that is informed by the anticipated need to share.
This tension between the need to be strategic in sharing and the requirement that media content be consumed prior to sharing will lead to a motivation to consume media that serves impression management goals, for the purposes of later sharing. Thus, when individuals expect to share or have a need to share media in the immediate or near future, they are expected to exercise selective exposure to facilitate those goals.

The question remains what kind of content those with expectations of anticipated sharing will selectively attend to. Sociological accounts of the performance of taste suggest that cultural goods, including mass communication, are employed to signal both existing and aspirational group affiliations and values (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Gans, 1977). Similarly, social identity theory specifies that social group affiliation is beneficial to people because it offers positive distinctiveness (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which is acquired through both group size and group status (Brewer, Manzi, & Shaw, 1993; Nesdale & Flesser, 2001).

These requirements for signaling belonging to a socially valued group, when applied to the display of tastes, yield two basic dimensions: the popularity and prestige of cultural goods. The popularity of a film, musician, or book indicates the extent of its acceptance by others. Prestige, on the other hand, signals the status associated with particular cultural goods and groups. For example, analysis of box office returns indicate that both popularity and prestige are influences on movie-going, as word-of-mouth and critical reviews both have independent effects on ticket sales (Kim, Park, & Park, 2013).

The popularity and prestige dimensions of taste, when considered as aspects of impression management, are also consistent with more general categories of impression
management strategies and tactics such as those described by Jones and Pittman (1982). Techniques such as self-promotion, exemplification, and intimidation attempt to augment the individual’s worth and excellence, while techniques such as ingratiation and supplication appeal to the audience through flattery and deference.

In addition to the anticipation of online taste performances, social networking site users also have expectations of what kind of media sharing or discussion is likely to take place. The nature of sharing and discussion, and the technological features that enable them, have implications for impression motivated behavior. In contrast, Atkin’s (1972) classic work on social utility only considered the value of discussing the content of news, rather than the display of news (or other media) consumption as a symbol in and of itself. While being able to talk about public affairs is highly functional, the consumption of cultural goods is a powerful interpersonal signal used to display belonging, status, and aspiration (Bourdieu, 1979/1984). Likewise, Liu’s (2007) excellent multi-method study of taste performances on social networking sites only examined the listing of tastes, as that was the limit of the technological affordances on social networking sites at the time. Now, users are also able to embed content (Messing & Westwood, in press) so that their peers are able to consume the same content that is being displayed. Even further, forms of “frictionless sharing” like Last.fm and the Washington Post Social Reader allow for peer surveillance of media use in real time or asynchronously (Silfverberg, Liikanen, & Lampinen, 2011). These different types of sharing offer different levels of self-presentational control (cf. Walther, 1996) and might have differential effects on selective
exposure. This third study experimentally varies the kind of sharing and discussion anticipated in online taste performances.

Accordingly, beliefs about control over message creation and transmission are important to the use of computer-mediated communication channels for impression management (O’Sullivan, 2000), and control perceptions are closely tied to technological features and affordances (as well as one’s own skills and abilities; Feaster, 2010). For example, greater perceived affordances for control over expression, privacy, and image were positively associated with more frequent and intensive Facebook usage (Kuo, Tseng, Tseng, & Chi, 2013).

The nature of the sharing will be experimentally varied to capture distinct forms of sharing that are analogous to the taste performance affordances and situations present in today’s social networking sites. As the experimental groups experience decreasing technological control over the impression management situation, they should compensate by exerting more control over their selective exposure and showing even greater impression-motivated bias toward popular and prestigious media content in their self-selected exposure to the video site.

H2a: Online media users spend more time with more prestigious media as the anticipated sharing of taste performances is increased.

H2b: Online media users spend more time with more popular media as the anticipated sharing of taste performances is increased.

H2c: The effect in H2b is stronger when media is more prestigious.

**Self-monitoring.** The personality trait of self-monitoring (M. Snyder, 1974) is
associated with more strategic and more effective (Turnley & Bolino, 2001) impression management behavior. Greater self-monitoring has also been shown to impact online self-presentation tactics (Rosenberg & Egbert, 2011). Therefore, high self-monitors should be more responsive to anticipated taste performances and show even greater selectivity than low self-monitors.

H3a: The effect in H2a is stronger among individuals who have high self-monitoring compared to those low in self-monitoring.

H3b: The effect in H2b is stronger among individuals who have high self-monitoring compared to those low in self-monitoring.

The Integrated Behavioral Model

Alternatively, these same dimensions of media content may lead to selective exposure, not because of impression management concerns in social situations involving anticipated future interaction, but rather because of the influence of perceived norms on behavior. The integrated behavioral model and related models developed from the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003; Montaño & Kasprzyk, 2008) posit that a key determinate of behavioral intentions and behavior are perceived norms—both injunctive norms and descriptive norms. Others’ expectations and behavior, combined with one’s own willingness to comply with those others, have a direct effect on behavioral intentions (in concert with attitudes and personal agency). Descriptive norms are reflective of the relative popularity of cultural goods, just as injunctive norms are reflective of prestige.

The integrated behavioral model specifies that cognitions such as perceived norms will determine behavioral intentions, rather than the situational factors that the impression
management perspective emphasizes as determinates. The theoretical perspective of the integrated behavioral model would imply that online sharing practices do not have an impact on the consumption of media. Rather, social influences are not driven by technologically-driven situations but rather existing beliefs about others. Although sharing practices might impact beliefs about others to the extent that online sharing makes norms more salient, one’s own anticipated sharing of media through online social media will not alter exposure.

Thus, according to integrated behavioral model, it is not anticipated future interaction that will predict preferences for popular and prestigious fare, but rather willingness to conform to others’ behaviors and expectations. This is further reflected in the following hypotheses.

H4a: Online media users spend more time with more prestigious media when attitudes toward anticipated sharing are more positive.

H4b: Online media users spend more time with more popular media when attitudes toward anticipated sharing are more positive.

H5a: Online media users spend more time with more prestigious media when willingness to comply with norms is higher.

H5b: Online media users spend more time with more popular media when willingness to comply with norms is higher.

**Optimal Distinctiveness**

This study also tests optimal distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991) as a factor in how people choose popular media content, especially when anticipating taste performances
via online sharing. If individuals engage in selective exposure for purposes of impression management via taste performances, or even if selectivity is merely driven by the influence of norms regardless of impression management situations, it would appear that affiliation with social groups is a fundamental explanation for selective exposure for popular and prestigious phenomena.

Indeed, a number of selective exposure studies have examined popularity indicators as a factor in the evaluation (Sundar, Knobloch-Westerwick, & Hastall, 2007) and selection (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2005; Messing & Westwood, in press) of online news stories, as well as user-generated videos (Fu, 2012). The results suggest that bandwagon effects are typical, in keeping with a subjective norms explanation for the appeal of popular and highly prestigious content over less popular or prestigious content.

However, studies making use of fine-grained levels of popularity indicators have found nuanced preference patterns suggesting that readers seek media content that is optimally distinct (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2005). Moderately popular choices may often be preferred over extremely popular choices. This desire to be optimally distinct (Brewer, 1991) may be even stronger when sharing via taste performances is expected, due to the added influence of impression motivation. Optimal distinctiveness is the product of belonging to an ideally sized group that allows for both inclusion into a larger identity while still maintaining distinctiveness and individuality. Content analysis of taste performances on social networking sites shows that individuals’ tastes tend to strike this same balance between belonging and difference (Liu, 2007). Yet little work has explicitly examined the relationship between optimal distinctiveness and impression management.
(for a relevant review, see Banaji & Prentice, 1994), much less the implications of impression management for optimally distinct media preferences. Berger and colleagues (Berger & Heath, 2007; Chan, Berger, & Van Boven, 2012) have demonstrated that divergence in taste is greater in consumer goods that are more public visible and to signal identity, compared to goods that are private or strictly functional. Additionally, changes in the need for uniqueness can impact the divergence versus conformity that consumers exhibit in identity-signaling choices (Chan et al., 2012).

H6: The effects in H1b, H2b, H2c, H4b, and H5b will exhibit curvilinear rather than linear patterns.

H7: The effects in H1b, H2b, H2c, H4b, and H5b will exhibit negative linear patterns for individuals who have high consumers’ need for uniqueness.

Discussion

The impression management and integrated behavioral model perspectives offer competing predictions about the impact of anticipated taste performances on selective exposure to variably popular and prestigious media content. The impression management perspective would suggest that anticipated sharing will lead to more exposure to these types of content. In addition, investigations of the self-monitoring trait and impression management suggest that individuals who report greater self-monitoring will be even more prone to this effect. In contrast, the integrated behavioral model suggests that the situational difference between the experimental groups (i.e., anticipated taste performance) will not impact selective exposure. Rather, greater exposure to popular and prestigious fare is likely, but is simply a function of descriptive and injunctive norms,
respectively. Therefore, selective exposure should only vary to the extent that willingness to comply with those two types of norms varies.

Given the selectivity that is evident in what is shared (e.g., Liu, 2007) in taste performances, it seems like that not only will impression construction occur (i.e., selective sharing), but also that impression motivation will lead to selective exposure for purposes of impression management.

Given prior findings regarding optimal distinctiveness and selective exposure to media fare that varies in popularity (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2005), the moderately popular categories of video clips should experience more selective exposure. Furthermore, this preference should be even greater in the treatment condition than in control, due to the impression management influence on the need to signal an optimally distinctive identity. However, for those individuals high on need for uniqueness, there should be a positive linear effect of television program popularity on selective exposure.

**Novel contributions.** This experiments is unique in that it tests the proposition that anticipated online sharing of taste performances has an impact on selective exposure. It also tests the relative explanatory power of the norm-focused integrated behavioral model against the situation-focused impression management perspective. It also integrates optimal distinctiveness theory into this account of impression-motivated selective exposure, and examines the moderating role of perceived control over impression management by varying the technological affordances of different types of taste performances practices and situations.
A previous psychology experiment demonstrated that impression motivation could influence selective exposure patterns (Kastenmüller et al., 2013). However, this study did so by testing whether exposure would correspond to a known audience’s bias. It did not examine identity-signaling impression management, nor did it consider the technological affordances involved in online taste performances. The proposed studies would examine how the desire to manage impression leads to the selection of messages that convey identification with valued groups through popularity and prestige.

Previous studies of the social utility concept have demonstrated that the anticipation of future discussion could lead to selective exposure (Atkin, 1972; Dillman Carpentier, 2009). However, these studies did not examine selective exposure and subsequent discussion through an impression management lens.

While the influence of bandwagon cues on selective exposure (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2005), preferences for identity-signaling consumer goods (Berger & Heath, 2007; Chan et al., 2012), and the selective sharing of taste performances on social networking sites (Liu, 2007) all suggest that optimal distinctiveness should play an important role in impression-motivated selective exposure, little work directly integrates impression management behavior and optimal distinctiveness theory. The present study will contribute empirical findings relevant to this theoretical integration. Finally, it also offers a novel test of how perceived control over impression management influences online behavior (Feaster, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2000), and clarifies what online technological features and social situations are more likely to lead to impression-motivated selective exposure.
Conclusion. The proposed study would elucidate how social factors play a role in selective exposure, especially as computer-mediated communication allows for unprecedented sharing of media content. The implications of these technological features for individuals’ media choices have big implications for design of these spaces, how media content is marketed and distributed, how media use is driven by and in turn affects social identity (Slater, 2007), and for our understanding of why people choose the media messages that they do. The social context of media use has been sporadically documented for many decades, and appears important enough to warrant far more rigorous testing and theory development.
Chapter 3: Methods

Stimuli Development

In order to evaluate and refine materials for the experiment, an online survey was conducted to test the effectiveness of both (to-be-used-within-subjects) stimuli manipulations and the inductions of (to-be-used-between-subjects) anticipated taste performances. This survey was conducted in two waves, the first of which (Pretest 1) evaluated the initial versions of the stimuli that were drafted for the experiment, and the second of which (Pretest 2) evaluated revised versions that were altered based on the results of Pretest 1. The first wave was also used to identify video clips for use in the experiment.

Stimuli selection. In the experiment, the popularity and prestige of videos would be manipulated with website-generated aggregate ratings of “user ratings” (indicative of popularity) and “critic ratings” (indicative of prestige). To allow for the testing of predictions derived from optimal distinctiveness theory, popularity was varied in 3 steps, with 1-star, 3-star, and 5-star (out of 5) user ratings. This was crossed in a 3 x 2 within-subjects design by prestige, which will feature 1-star and 5-star (out of 5) critic ratings. These rating images are presented in Appendix C.

A total of 12 90-second clips edited from documentary short films were pretested. Clips were taken from the Vimeo website, www.vimeo.com, which features high-quality
user-created videos that make use of high definition settings. Documentary categories and keywords on the site were searched, and clips were selected for consideration if they clearly fit into the documentary genre, were at least 90 seconds in length, featured similar elements (music, a voiceover, just a few on-screen graphics, and humans engaged in some activity), were believable as scoring either very low or very high on both popularity and prestige, had professional production values, were not highly arousing or frenetic, and could be downloaded in a 640 x 360 MPEG-4 format. A short clip from each was edited, while attempting to maintain comprehensibility and similarity to other clips. The original title for each video was retained, and presented as the only paratextual information during pretesting. Titles and hyperlinks for the initial list of 12 documentary films are presented in Appendix D.

Additionally, pretest participants were presented with the experiment’s cover story, followed by three different induction scripts, for the control group, the induction of anticipated sharing, and the induction of anticipated automatic sharing (i.e., frictionless sharing). The induction scripts for each condition are presented along with the full instructions from the main experiment, in Appendix E.

**Procedure.** Participants were recruited to participate in a 60-minute online survey. After providing consent, they were presented with the three sets of stimuli (ratings, videos, and induction scripts) and asked to rate them on the measures provided. The order of these sections was randomized. Additionally, within each type of stimulus, the order of different items was also randomized further (e.g., the 12 videos were presented in a random order).
**Expected results.** Repeated measures ANOVAs were used to test all of the stimuli manipulation checks. For the manipulation of rating indicators, 3-star user-rated clips were expected to have higher values for perceived popularity and descriptive norms than do 1-star user-rated clips, and 5-star user-rated clips should have even higher scores than the 3-star clips. Separately, 5-star critic-rated clips were expected to have higher values for perceived prestige and injunctive norms than did 1-star critic-rated clips. Next, the video clips themselves should ideally have little to no differences in their enjoyment, popularity, or prestige, and the six clips that are most similar on these three dimensions would be selected for use in the experiment. Finally, for the manipulation of condition, the sharing scenario was expected to be rated as more public and impression motivating than the control condition, and the *automated* sharing scenario should be rated even higher on both of those measures than the sharing scenario.

**Pretest 1: Draft Stimuli**

**Sample.** The sample for the first wave of stimuli pretesting was 81.5% female; 3.7% Black/African-American, 3.7% Hispanic/Latino, 81.5% Non-Hispanic White/Caucasian, 3.7% Multiracial, 7.4% Other; and ranged in age from 18 to 23, \( M = 19.56, SD = 1.22 \).

**Measures.**

**Popularity (ratings).** Each of the six sets of video ratings were rated by participants on how popular they expected the corresponding video would be. Four 7-point items (e.g., “this video is very popular”) were developed and adapted (Chang, Lee,
& Kim, 2006; Mishra, Umesh, and Stem, 1993), \( \alpha > .960 \) for each rating combination. See Appendix F for the full set of items.

**Prestige (ratings).** Similarly, perceived prestige was measured for each rating set, with five 7-point items (e.g., “this video is sophisticated”) developed based on Vigneron and Johnson (2004), \( \alpha > .871 \) for each rating combination (see Appendix F).

**Descriptive norms (ratings).** In addition to popularity and prestige, rating sets were examined for their implications for perceived descriptive norms regarding watching the videos (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011; see Appendix F). The four 7-point items (e.g., “most people like me would like this video”) formed a reliable measure for each combination, \( \alpha > .912 \).

**Injunctive norms (ratings).** Injunctive norms for videos were also examined with a set of four items (e.g., “Most people like me would think I should watch this video”), \( \alpha > .915 \) for each rating combination (see Appendix F).

**Enjoyment (videos).** After viewing each of 12 videos, participants rated the video on their enjoyment, using the INT-ENJ, a subscale developed by Ryan (1982) and revised by McAuley, Duncan, and Tammen (1989) (see Appendix F). The measure consists of five 7-point items (e.g., “watching the video was fun”), and was reliable for each video, \( \alpha > .832 \).

**Popularity (videos).** The perceived popularity measure used above, on video ratings, was also used to gauge the perceived popularity of each video clip, \( \alpha > .898 \) for each video (see Appendix F).
**Prestige (videos).** Likewise, each video was also rated on perceived prestige, with the same perceived prestige scale used for ratings, $\alpha > .800$ for each video (see Appendix F).

**Publicness (induction).** A set of four items were adapted and developed from earlier measures (Bateman, Pike, & Butler 2011; Gonzales & Hancock, 2008) to measure perceived publicness of an online situation. The scale’s items (e.g., “the discussion group will see which video content I chose”) ranged from 1 to 7 (see Appendix F). For each of the three induction scripts presented to respondents, the measure formed a reliable measure, $\alpha > .964$.

**Impression motivation (induction).** Four items were adapted and developed from Kwon and Chon (2009) to measure impression motivation in the video viewing situation (see Appendix F). Scaled from 1 to 7, these items (e.g., “watching video content can help me relate to the other group members”) were also reliable for each of the three induction scripts, $\alpha > .886$.

**Results.**

**Video stimuli.** Three different repeated-measures one-way ANOVAs tested for differences between the 12 selected video clips on ratings of enjoyment, perceived popularity, and perceived prestige.

There was an overall effect of video on enjoyment, $F(11, 286) = 5.10, p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$. Pairwise comparisons, with Sidak correction to account for familywise error but maintain statistical power, revealed a number of differences in enjoyment between different videos, as presented in Table A.1.
An overall effect was also significant for popularity, $F(11, 286) = 6.19, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .19$, but with fewer pairwise differences. Only two videos rated above the scale midpoint of 4, and only one of those was significantly different from other videos (see Table A.1).

Finally, differences in prestige were not evident, $F(11, 286) = 1.46, p = .15, \eta_p^2 = .05$, with no significant pairwise differences.

**Draft induction scripts.** Two repeated-measures one-way ANOVAs were used to test perceptions of the three induction scripts on perceived publicness and impression motivation. Descriptive results are presented in Table A.2.

For publicness, there was a significant effect of induction, $F(2, 50) = 5.94, p = .005, \eta_p^2 = .19$. However, pairwise comparisons with Sidak correction revealed that while the sharing induction was perceived as significantly more public than the control condition, the automated sharing induction was not significantly different from either control or sharing (see means in Table A.2).

With regard to impression motivation, there was also a significant effect of induction, $F(2, 50) = 5.78, p = .005, \eta_p^2 = .19$. In this case, pairwise comparisons indicated that both sharing and automated sharing inductions were perceived as more motivating than the control script, but there was no difference between sharing and automated sharing (see Table A.2).

**Draft video ratings.** A series of repeated-measures two-way ANOVAs tested differences in perceptions of the six different options created for rating video clips. These sets of ratings were measured on how they were perceived to indicate popularity,
prestige, descriptive norms, and injunctive norms. The ANOVA model followed a 2 x 3 (critic ratings x user ratings) design. Descriptive results are presented in Table A.3.

As expected, there was a strong effect of user ratings on perceived popularity, $F(2, 50) = 37.33, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .60$. However, there was an unexpected effect of critic ratings on popularity, $F(1, 25) = 32.93, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .57$. User and critic ratings did not, however, interact to predict popularity, $F(2, 50) = 1.56, p = .22, \eta_p^2 = .06$. Means and pairwise comparisons are presented in Table A.3.

A similar pattern followed for perceived prestige, in which critic ratings had their expected effect, $F(1, 25) = 39.52, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .61$, along with an effect due to user ratings, $F(2, 50) = 20.33 p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .45$. There was no interaction between the ratings types, $F(2, 50) = 1.75, p = .18, \eta_p^2 = .07$.

Likewise, both critic and user ratings each impacted perceptions of descriptive norms, $F(1, 25) = 50.21, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .67$, and $F(2, 50) = 42.33 p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .63$, respectively, and perceptions of injunctive norms, $F(1, 25) = 31.54, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .56$, and $F(2, 50) = 51.99 p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .68$. Again, no interactions between critic and user ratings were evident, $ps > .78, \eta_p^2 \leq .01$.

**Discussion.** First of all, the pretest allowed for the identification of six documentary film clips that were comparable on low-to-moderate enjoyment and had similar popularity and prestige ratings. Of these six films, two examine artisan craft making (*The Knife Maker* and *Airstream Living*), three examine adventuresome exploration in the outdoors (*Long Live the Kings*, *Ray: A Life Underwater*, and *Living on...*)
Ice), and one portrays an educational initiative regarding local food production (Share the Pie).

Given the inadvertent effects of the within-subjects manipulations, and the underperformance of the automatic sharing induction, these materials were revised to enhance their manipulations and convey the desired perceptions.

Given the similarity of the star system for user and critic ratings, they were replaced with green laurels for critics (mimicking the laurels commonly used to promote films as festival award winners) and buckets of popcorn for user ratings (an icon adopted from www.rottentomatoes.com, which conveys images of mass audiences). The relative size of the “User” and “Critic” labels was also increased for these indicators, to reduce any ambiguity.

The inductions scripts were revised as well. Based on an examination of open-ended responses, it was emphasized that the individual was assigned this task, and that it may not necessarily be the same task (or videos) that other participants encountered. More importantly, the language of sharing and automatic sharing inductions was clarified to stress that a single video would be chosen in the regular sharing condition, to be shared for discussion, and that any and all videos viewed in the automatic sharing condition would appear persistently on the individual’s discussion profile.

Given these changes, a second wave of the pretest was conducted to assess the new within- and between-subjects manipulations.
Pretest 2: Revised Stimuli

Sample. This wave’s sample was 75.9% female; 10.3% Asian, 3.4% Black/African-American, 82.8% Non-Hispanic White/Caucasian, 3.4% Other; and ranged in age from 18 to 28, $M = 20.38$, $SD = 2.51$.

Measures. The same measures as used in Pretest 1 were employed to assess the revised versions of the rating system, popularity $\alpha > .876$, prestige $\alpha > .928$, descriptive norms $\alpha > .931$, injunctive norms $\alpha > .929$, and of the induction scripts, publicness $\alpha > .923$, impression motivation (induction). $\alpha > .889$.

Results.

Revised induction scripts. As with the draft versions of the induction scripts, the revised versions were tested with repeated-measures one-way ANOVAs to assess their effects on perceived publicness and impression motivation.

The ANOVA for perceived publicness was significant, $F(2, 50) = 21.40$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .46$. While the strength of the manipulation appeared to have improved with the revisions, automated sharing was still statistically indistinct from sharing (see Table A.4). Similarly, there was an effect for impression motivation, $F(2, 54) = 5.45$, $p = .007$, $\eta^2_p = .17$, yet the mean for automated sharing fell in between those for control and sharing (see Table A.4).

Revised video ratings. The new sets of ratings for videos were tested with repeated-measures two-way ANOVAs to examine differences in popularity, prestige, descriptive norms, and injunctive norms. As with the tests for draft versions, the ANOVA
model followed a 2 x 3 (critic ratings x user ratings) design. Descriptive results are presented in Table A.5.

A strong effect of user ratings on perceived popularity persisted, $F(2, 56) = 51.94, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .65$. However, the effect of critic ratings on popularity also remained, $F(1, 28) = 18.17, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .39$. As before, no interaction between user and critic ratings was evident, $F(2, 56) = 1.35, p = .267, \eta_r^2 = .05$.

Likewise, critic ratings successfully affected perceived prestige, $F(1, 27) = 30.78, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .53$, as did user ratings, $F(2, 54) = 18.91, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .41$. Additionally, in this instance, there was an interaction between critic and user ratings, $F(2, 54) = 5.29, p = .008, \eta_r^2 = .16$, such that the linear effect of user ratings on prestige was less pronounced when critic ratings were high.

For descriptive norms, there were effects of critic ratings, $F(1, 28) = 34.02, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .55$, user ratings, $F(2, 56) = 25.09, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .47$, and their interaction, $F(2, 56) = 11.26, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .29$. As with prestige, the interaction indicated a less pronounced effect of user ratings given a high critic rating (see Table A.5).

Finally, injunctive norms were affected by critic ratings, $F(1, 28) = 34.31, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .55$, and user ratings, $F(2, 56) = 26.87, p < .001, \eta_r^2 = .49$. Their interaction was not significant, $F(2, 56) = 2.92, p < .06, \eta_r^2 = .09$.

**Final Stimuli Selection**

Although the within-subjects manipulation items, the user and critic ratings, showed improvement in terms of stronger effect sizes for their intended targets as well as greater discrepancies between intended and unintended effect sizes, those unintended
effects were still clearly quite persistent. This points to a possible challenge of disentangling popularity and prestige, and warrants further consideration in the main experiment and in future research. An immediate solution was to ensure that a post-test manipulation check was included in the main study that would examine perceptions of these ratings in the actual experimental setting.

Regarding the between-subjects materials, the script for the automatic sharing condition continued to disappoint, showing no distinction from the other sharing condition. In light of this failure to generate to distinguish sharing situations in terms of their publicness or potential to motivate, anticipated automatic sharing was removed as a potential experimental cell. The main experiment would proceed with only the control and sharing groups as between-subjects factors.

**Main Study**

A 2 x 2 x 3 experiment was conducted to test the hypotheses presented in Chapter 2. Specifically, a 2-level between-subjects factor was used to manipulate the anticipation of sharing taste performances, where participants were assigned to either a control or an anticipated sharing condition.

Additionally, two within-subjects factors manipulated the popularity and prestige of the media content provided for viewing. The first is a 2-level factor of prestige (low vs. high) and the second is a 3-level factor of popularity (low vs. moderate vs. high).

A cover story of studying “online discussion groups” was used in the service of inducing anticipated sharing. In an initial session several days prior to the experiment, participants completed an online questionnaire that solicited moderators and covariates,
i.e., individual differences, media use, and attitudes. In the second session, participants engaged in a lab session in which they prepared a profile for an ostensible discussion group task and were then asked to browse a video website while waiting for the discussion group to begin. The browsing task was followed by a short questionnaire and debriefing. Each session lasted about 30 minutes, for a total duration of under an hour.

**Participants.** Undergraduate students at The Ohio State University were recruited to participate in the experiment. A total of 169 participants signed up for the study, 46 of which came from a School of Communication participant pool that required student participation in a number of research studies. The other 123 participants were recruited from other courses in Communication, and were offered extra course credit. Individuals who earned credit for the stimuli pretest were not eligible for the experiment. Of these initial participants, 18 only completed Session 1 and never participated in Session 2 in the lab. An additional 19 participants did participate in Session 2 but experienced technical errors or failed to follow directions (e.g., used their mobile phone during the study) and were excluded. Finally, the data were examined for participants who were inattentive during the selective exposure task. Five individuals were identified as outliers: they spent more than 180 seconds viewing a single video or more than 180 seconds on the overview page. After removing these outliers, a total of 127 complete and valid cases remained for hypothesis testing.

The sample consisted of 66.9% women and 33.1% men, and ranged in age from 18 to 41 (\(M = 21.51, SD = 2.85\)). With regard to ethnicity, the sample identified as 15.7%
Asian, 7.1% Black/African-American, 3.9% Hispanic/Latino, 0.8% Pacific Islander, 68.5% Non-Hispanic White/Caucasian, 2.4% Multiracial, and 1.6% Other.

Session 1. Upon signing up for the “Online Group Discussions” study several days in advance, participants were directed to an online survey, where they provided informed consent and were asked to complete an online questionnaire that measured personal characteristics relevant to the study. Participants reported their self-monitoring and need for uniqueness, as well as several covariates such as self-esteem, need for cognition, extraversion and neuroticism, information control, media use habits, and attitudes toward various media. Two scales measuring narcissism and the big five personality traits, the NPI-16 and TIPI, respectively, were included as distractor items and will not be discussed further (see Appendix G). Finally, participants reported their basic demographic information. Appendix G reports the full sequence of items.

Session 2. Upon entering the lab, participants were instructed that a mixed-sex group of 10 students from both Ohio State (OSU) and New York University (NYU) would be engaging in a series of group discussions, both that day as well as during a follow-up study at a later date. Furthermore, participants were told that they would be rating their discussion partners both after the present session and in again in the future session in two weeks, and that the highest-rated participant from each university would receive a $20 gift card. Finally, to establish some level of interaction with the supposed discussion group members (cf. Ramirez, 2007) and establish their social attractiveness (Walther, 2007), participants were asked to fill out fields to generate their own supposed discussion profile, and then simple profile pages for several of the group members were
presented. These include fictitious names, photographs, demographic information, and a short "about me" paragraph. Participants were then told that the experimenters needed for everyone else in the study to finish generating their profiles before logging in to the group chat session could occur.

Participants were asked to wait while their profile was generated, others finished creating their profiles, and the discussion software “initialized.” During this wait, participants were presented with a video website, which was presented as either a separate study or a task within the main study, depending on condition assignment. Those randomly assigned to the control \((n = 64)\) were told it was a separate study. Those in the sharing condition \((n = 63)\) were told that they would be expected to share a video clip with the discussion group in order to facilitate discussion.

At this point, for the treatment group only, anticipated taste performances were induced by specifying that during this waiting period, participants could view a website that was part of a separate study, which had short video clips for viewing. The stated purpose of viewing the clips was that individuals would be asked to share various materials as part of the group discussion. The on-screen instructions told the participant that because they had finished their profile already, they had been selected to examine video clips from a site the researchers were developing and testing, and that they would be expected to share a video with the study group for viewing and subsequent discussion.

For the control group, they were instead told that because they finished their profile already, they could occupy the time by helping to evaluate a video site for a separate study that the researchers were preparing.
Therefore, participants expected to interact with a valued group, with the possibility of rewards. For the treatment condition, however, they anticipated to make a taste performance through the sharing of a video with their group. This is in contrast to the control condition participants, who expected relatively private viewing of videos as part of an unrelated study.

Participants were then redirected to a separate URL, where they were able to access the video website, which offered six 90-second clips of documentary films. Which videos were viewed, for how long, was tracked in 15-second intervals by the study software (cf. Hastall & Knobloch-Westerwick, 2013; Knobloch-Westerwick, in press). This browsing session lasted a total of five minutes.

After browsing, participants indicated their sharing intentions, their enjoyment of the browsing session, and their attitudes toward each clip. They also reported their attitudes toward the sharing situation and their willingness to comply with norms from a number of relevant referents, and they completed manipulation checks. These measures described below and are presented in full in Appendix H. Finally, participants were debriefed as to the true nature of the study, and it was explained that no follow-up session was required and that all participants would be entered into a drawing for the gift card from the cover story.

**Measures in Session 1**

The following variables were measured in the Session 1 online survey. The complete sets of items for each measure are presented in Appendix G.
Self-esteem. Trait self-esteem with measured with a 10-item scale (Rosenberg, 1965) ranging from 1 to 5, $M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.71$, $\alpha = .890$ (see Appendix G).

Self-monitoring. The revised self-monitoring scale (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984) was used to measure a multidimensional conceptualization of self-monitoring, which consists of ability to modify self-presentation, $M = 3.15$, $SD = 0.72$, $\alpha = .761$, sensitivity to expressive behavior of others, $M = 2.61$, $SD = 0.89$, $\alpha = .862$, cross-situational variability, $M = 2.01$, $SD = 1.21$, $\alpha = .926$, and attention to social comparison information, $M = 2.11$, $SD = 0.80$, $\alpha = .881$. The full scale consists of 33 items, scaled from 0 to 5 (see Appendix G). The scale as a whole proved reliable, and as such was used in its entirety as a predictor, $M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.62$, $\alpha = .902$.

Need for cognition. An 18-item scale (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982) ranging from 1 to 5 as measured individual differences in the need for cognition, $M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.59$, $\alpha = .877$ (see Appendix G).

Information control. Feaster’s (2011) information control scale measures individual differences in the ability to successfully manage online interactions (see Appendix G). Its 18 items range from 1 to 5, $M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.48$, $\alpha = .862$.

Extraversion and neuroticism. The Eysenck personality questionnaire brief version (Sato, 2005) is a relatively short measure of the personality traits of extroversion and neuroticism. Each trait is measured with 12 items ranging from 1 to 5 (see Appendix G), extraversion $M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.70$, $\alpha = .927$, neuroticism $M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.84$, $\alpha = .919$. 
**Consumers’ need for uniqueness.** A shortened form of this inventory, which measures individual differences in the consumption of goods that differentiate the individual, was developed by Ruvio, Shoham, and Brenčič (2008). It consists of three dimensions, each of which makes use of four items ranging from 1 to 5 (see Appendix G). Those subscales are creative choice, \( M = 3.13, SD = 0.88, \alpha = .849 \), unpopular choice, \( M = 2.80, SD = 0.93, \alpha = .848 \), and avoidance of similarity, \( M = 2.45, SD = 0.96, \alpha = .921 \). The scale was used in its entirety, and forms a reliable index, \( M = 2.79, SD = 0.71, \alpha = .880 \).

**Media use.** Participants reported how frequently they spent time with various media by indicating how often they used each medium “on an average day,” on a 0 to 7 scale (see Appendix G for scale labels). In addition to question about television, movies, radio or music, and print media, five different aspects of Internet use relevant to the study topic were asked about (see Appendix G). The items, indicating frequency of use of the Internet, social networking sites, instant messaging and chat, discussion forums, and video websites, were averaged to form a general index of Internet use, \( M = 3.31, SD = 0.95, \alpha = .608 \).

**Sharing propensity.** Even more specifically, participants indicated how frequently they posted, shared, or discussed media content via social media. Items asked about videos, music, websites, and photographs with a 0 to 6 scale (see Appendix G). They formed a reliable measure of sharing propensity, \( M = 4.90, SD = 1.28, \alpha = .837 \).

**Attitudes toward documentaries.** Participants reported their general attitudes, on 7-point scales, towards documentary films, \( M = 4.54, SD = 1.77 \), and television
documentaries, $M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.76$, as well as other film and television genres and various online media (see Appendix G).

**Measures in Session 2**

**Selective exposure.** Extending an established procedure used in a variety of text- and graphics-based media contexts (Knobloch-Westerwick, in press), participants were instructed that they were free to browse the site with video clips. Figures B.1 and B.2 present example screenshots from the overview and individual video pages. A total of five minutes was allotted to browsing, thus ensuring that participants were only able to view up to half of the video content, minus time spent on the overview page, ensuring selectivity. While participants viewed the VideoTube website, the study software unobtrusively measured time spent viewing each page (including the overview page and each of the six individual video pages) in seconds. These data were used to construct measures of selective exposure to each video, as categorized by its critic and user ratings. Browsing time for each type of video was computed both in 15-second intervals, and as total scores across the entire 300-second browsing period.

The average time spent on the overview time was $M = 49.54$, $SD = 32.29$. The average respondent viewed a total of 3.50 videos, $SD = 0.93$. Among all those videos that were selected by a participant, the time spent on that video was $M = 77.45$, $SD = 18.94$.

The within-subjects manipulations of prestige and popularity (via critic and user ratings) were assigned to videos in a Latin Square design. This allowed for the independent assignment of rating manipulations to videos, without any possible confounds between video content and ratings of prestige and popularity. For exploratory
purposes, a one-way ANOVA tested whether the different videos titles differed in exposure times, regardless of their manipulation via ratings. While the omnibus test was significant, $F(5,565) = 2.48, p = .031, \eta^2 = .034$, only one pairwise comparison with Sidak correction showed a significant difference between viewing times by title (between 2 and 6, $p = .027$), all other $ps > .228$. Average times for the different videos ranged from 34.21 s ($SD = 38.59$) to 51.76 s ($SD = 45.95$). This is in keeping with the testing during stimuli development that showed minimal differences between the videos in terms of their enjoyability and other perceptions.

**Sharing intentions.** Immediately after the 5-minute browsing period, participants were shown the titles and thumbnails for all six videos and asked to indicate which video they would prefer to share with the online discussion group. Ratings were not shown at this time for the videos. Additionally, the question was worded to make sense with both the control and treatment condition (see Appendix H). Participants chose a single video.

**Favorite video.** Participants also indicated which of the videos they deemed their favorite, from the set of six titles and thumbnails (see Appendix H).

**Enjoyment.** Participants reported how much they enjoyed browsing the video site as a whole, using the INT-ENJ described above. The scale consists of five items (e.g., “watching the video content was fun”), ranging from 1 to 7, $M = 4.28$, $SD = 1.27$, $\alpha = .878$.

**Attitudes toward videos.** Attitudes toward each of the six video clips were reported (see Appendix H). Participants responded to the prompt “specifically, how do
you feel about the documentary clip <TITLE>” from 1= very negative to 7 = very positive.

**Attitudes toward the impression management situation.** Using items with similar wordings as the impression motivation measure (see below), participants indicated how they evaluated the opportunity to manage impressions on group discussion members. Four items (e.g., “the opportunity to relate to the other group members is: ”) ranging from 1 = very negative to 7 = very positive, formed a reliable measure of attitude toward the situation, $M = 4.79$, $SD = 0.91$, $\alpha = .785$ (see Appendix H).

**Norms.** Participants indicated their willingness to comply (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) with injunctive norms regarding media use [e.g., “how much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) your friends think you should consume?”]. Reference groups ranged from the general (e.g., classmates) to the specific (e.g., other participants). The nine items (see Appendix H), ranging from 1 to 7, were very reliable as a measure of willingness to comply, $M = 3.15$, $SD = 1.39$, $\alpha = .938$.

**Perceived publicness.** A manipulation check assessed how public participants perceived their video consumption to be. The four items are the same as those used in stimuli development, and were reliable, $M = 4.68$, $SD = 1.19$, $\alpha = .795$ (see Appendix H).

**Impression motivation.** Likewise, a manipulation check for impression motivation employed the same measure from stimuli development. Those four items also formed a reliable measure of impression motivation, $M = 4.50$, $SD = 1.05$, $\alpha = .761$ (see Appendix H).
**Video rating perceptions.** A final manipulation check asked participants to evaluate the six different combinations of ratings that had been assigned to videos. These were presented by themselves, without corresponding videos. In contrast to the stimuli development procedure, a single item measures (e.g., “a video with this rating would be very prestigious”) were used to capture both perceived prestige and perceived popularity for each set (see Appendix H),

**Analytical Approach**

Results will be primarily analyzed with a series of nested mixed effects ANCOVA models, in which experimental condition is a between-subjects factor and critic and user ratings are within-subjects factors. Additionally, the integrated behavioral model hypotheses and moderating trait hypotheses will be tested, (a) first by their inclusion as covariates in the ANCOVA, and (b) second by regression models that will allow for examining the nature of these continuous predictors’ effects on browsing different types of videos. Post-hoc analyses will examine the role of time in selectivity, other potential moderators of selective exposure effects, and impacts on other outcomes such as attitudes and sharing intentions.
Chapter 4: Results

Hypothesis Testing

Mixed effects models. Before testing the effects of experimental condition and video ratings on selective exposure in seconds spent viewing videos, selective exposure was also assessed in a preliminary analysis by examining which videos were selected (i.e., dichotomous measures of whether articles were viewed or not). The mixed effects ANOVA showed main effects for critic ratings, \( F(1, 125) = 5.99, p = .016, \eta^2_p = .05 \), and user ratings, \( F(1, 250) = 7.14, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .05 \). However, condition did not moderate these effects, \( F(1, 125) = 0.61, p = .44, \eta^2_p = .005 \), and \( F(2, 250) = 1.51, p = .22, \eta^2_p = .01 \), respectively. Additionally, there was no interaction between critic and user ratings, \( F(2, 250) = 1.32, p = .27, \eta^2_p = .01 \), and no three-way interaction with condition, \( F(2, 250) = 0.14, p = .87, \eta^2_p = .001 \).

Next, time spent browsing was used as the dependent variable, in a series of nested ANCOVA models (labeled Models 1-4). The first of these, Model 1, a 2 (critic rating) x 3 (user rating) x 2 (condition) mixed effects ANOVA, yielded results very similar to those of the preliminary analysis examining dichotomous choice. Time spent browsing in Model 1 showed main effects for the within-subjects manipulations of critic and user ratings. Critic ratings yielded a main effect, \( F(1, 125) = 11.17, p = .001, \eta^2_p = .08 \). Participants spent an average of 37.48 s (\( se = 1.54 \)) viewing each low prestige video,
compared to an average of 47.68 s (se = 1.65) viewing each high prestige video.

Hypothesis 1a was supported. The main effect of user ratings was significant, $F(2, 250) = 12.25, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .09$. Furthermore, it showed a significant linear contrast, $F(1, 125) = 22.85, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .15$, rather than a quadratic contrast, as the average time spent on low, moderate, and high popularity videos increased from 33.51 s (se = 2.37) to 40.58 s (se = 2.39), to 53.66 s (se = 2.53), respectively. Thus, hypothesis 1b was supported, and it was not qualified as predicted in hypothesis 6. As with the preliminary analysis, condition did not significantly moderate exposure to videos by critic rating, $F(1, 125) = 0.15, p = .69, \eta_p^2 = .001$, or by user rating, $F(2, 250) = 1.92, p = .15, \eta_p^2 = .02$. Likewise, there was no interaction between critic and user ratings (see Model 1 in Table A.7; means are reported under Model 1 in Table A.8). Thus, this model offered no support for hypotheses 1c, 2a, 2b, or 2c.

Next, Model 1 was extended by adding a number of covariates: sex, age, self-esteem, need for cognition, extraversion, neuroticism, Internet use, online sharing propensity, and informational control. Sex was entered as a dichotomous variable (-1 male, 1 female), and all other variables were mean-centered prior to entry into this ANCOVA (Model 2 in Table A.7). The results were largely similar to Model 1, except that a marginal interaction emerged between condition and user ratings, $F(2, 232) = 2.63, p = .07, \eta_p^2 = .02$. Furthermore, a significant quadratic within-subjects contrast was evident, $F(1, 116) = 5.70, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Among the covariates, there was also evidence that need for cognition moderated exposure to videos by user rating, $F(2, 232) = 5.41, p = .005, \eta_p^2 = .04$. The within-subjects contrast for this effect was also quadratic,
$F(2, 232) = 10.21, p = .002, \eta^2_p = .08$. These curvilinear effects of condition and need for cognition are explored further in subsequent models.

The next ANCOVA, Model 3, was used to test the competing predictions of the integrated behavioral model that the social influence of video ratings would be attributable to attitudes and norms. Participants’ attitudes toward the sharing situation and their willingness to comply with injunctive norms were added as additional covariate predictors. Both variables significantly affected selective exposure to low versus high prestige videos, where attitudes $F(1, 109) = 7.58, p = .007, \eta^2_p = .07$, and norms $F(1, 109) = 7.48, p = .007, \eta^2_p = .06$. However, attitudes and norms had no significant effects with regard to video popularity. The nature of these effects is further examined with the regression models reported below.

Additionally, with the introduction of attitudes and norms into the Model 3 mixed effects ANCOVA, the interaction between condition and user ratings became statistically significant, $F(2, 218) = 3.11, p = .047, \eta^2_p = .03$. The results are presented in Figure B.3, demonstrating the curvilinear nature of sharing’s effect, contrast $F(1, 109) = 6.70, p = .011, \eta^2_p = .06$. In the control condition, browsing of low popularity videos was quite low, $M = 30.60, se = 3.52$, compared to moderate, $M = 46.80, se = 3.38$, and high popularity videos, $M = 48.27, se = 3.79$. This is in contrast to the relatively curvilinear bend in the sharing condition, where low, $M = 36.33, se = 3.52$, and moderate popularity, $M = 35.97, se = 3.38$, videos were not as highly viewed as high popularity videos, $M = 57.92, se = 3.79$. Surprisingly, it is in the control condition rather than the sharing condition that the moderately popularity videos were relatively preferred for viewing.
Thus, hypothesis 2b was not fully supported. Instead, the results followed the opposite pattern. Further, they were qualified as suggested in hypothesis 6, but not in the predicted fashion. However, it does make sense (with regard to hypothesis 2b) that high popularity videos were more heavily selected when sharing was anticipated, although this is not in keeping with the prediction derived from optimal distinctiveness theory (hypothesis 6). Figure B.3 also separates these effects further, by video prestige, yet there was no significant three-way interaction between prestige, popularity, and condition, $F(2, 218) = 0.26, p = .77, \eta^2_p = .002$, so that hypothesis 3c was not supported.

The last mixed effects ANCOVA model reported in Table A.7 (Model 4) tests for self-monitoring and need for uniqueness as individual differences that should moderate the effects of sharing expectations and video ratings on selective exposure. Yet, self-monitoring did not moderate selective exposure to critic ratings ($p = .15$) or user ratings, ($p = .51$), nor did it interact with condition and those ratings ($p = .78$ and $p = .31$). The relevant hypotheses, 3a and 3b, were not supported. Similarly, need for uniqueness did not moderate rating effects ($p = .48$ and $p = .32$) or condition effects ($p = .59$ and $p = .68$). No linear or quadratic contrasts among user ratings emerged when need for uniqueness was included in interaction terms, providing no support for hypothesis 7. Very similar results were obtained in ANCOVAs that added self-monitoring or need for uniqueness to the model separately.

**Regression models.** To more fully investigate the effects of attitudes and selective exposure to low and high prestige videos, regression models with hierarchical entry were constructed to test their effects on browsing different sets of videos. To more
clearly test the effects of these variables in a regression model, new selective exposure measures were computed that summed all low-prestige browsing (regardless of popularity) and summed all high-prestige browsing (regardless of popularity). Similarly, all low, moderate, and high popularity browsing was summed into three variables, regardless of prestige.

Regression models entered the covariates of condition, sex, age, self-esteem, need for cognition, extraversion, neuroticism, Internet use, sharing propensity, and informational control into the first hierarchical step. The next step in the model entered attitude toward the situation and willingness to comply with injunctive norms simultaneously into a second block. This model was repeated for each of the five selective exposure measures, and the results appear in the upper section of Table A.9.

Both attitudes and norms predicted selective exposure to low and to high prestige videos. Interestingly, in a reversal from hypothesis 5a, the effect of norms was positive for time spent viewing low prestige videos, and negative for high prestige videos. In contrast, attitudes were a negative predictor of videos with the 1-star critic rating, and a positive predictor of videos with the 5-star critic rating (see top panel of Table A.9), supporting hypothesis 4a. As seen in the ANCOVA, there was no support for hypotheses 4b or 5b.

Post-Hoc Analyses

**Time series analysis.** The use of the selective exposure paradigm (Knobloch-Westerwick, in press) also allows for examining selective exposure behavior in increments of time, such as in 15-second intervals. Given the artificial assignment of 5
minutes to browse videos in the present study, this allows for further analysis of the results that might indicate if individuals vary in their selective exposure patterns over time. For example, participants might exhibit stronger selectivity in their initial choices, and then gradually move toward other types of less-attractive content later in the browsing session.

To examine this possibility, the Model 3 mixed effects ANCOVA reported above was amended to include an additional repeated-measures factor, namely the 20 different 15-second intervals that constituted the browsing session. The results of this analysis appear in Figures B.4 through B.7.

Figures B.4 and B.5 show browsing by prestige, for the control and sharing conditions, respectively. At a descriptive level, it would appear that after an initial preference for high-prestige videos in the sharing condition, participants then showed an increased interest in low-prestige videos in the period between 90 and 150 seconds into the browsing session. They then returned to a preference for high-prestige. This is in contrast to a more general preference, in the control condition, for high prestige that only dissipated toward the end of the session. However, the interaction between critic ratings, condition, and time interval was not statistically significant, $F(19, 2071) = 1.69$, GG-correction, $p = .16$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, nor was the interaction between critic ratings and time, $p = .60$.

Figures B.6 and B.7 present browsing by popularity for control and sharing conditions. Once again, the two conditions suggest distinctive patterns. In the sharing group, participants showed a consistently strong preference for high-popularity videos
until the very end of the session. In contrast, the control group showed a strong initial interest in the videos with high user ratings, but this changed at the halfway mark in favor a small selective preference for moderately popular videos. However, this three-way interaction between user ratings, condition, and time interval also fell short of significance, $F(38, 4142) = 1.48$, GG-correction, $p = .18$, $\eta^2_p = .01$. There was, however, a marginal interaction between user rating and time, $F(38, 4142) = 1.93$, GG-correction, $p = .07$, $\eta^2_p = .02$, attributable to the reduction over time in viewing of highly popular videos. Similar results for prestige- and popularity-driven browsing over time were obtained without the inclusion of covariates.

**Effects on sharing intentions, favorite video, and attitudes toward the videos.**

After the browsing session, participants indicated their responses toward the videos in several other ways. They reported indicated which video they would most like to share, as well as their favorite videos. They also reported attitudes toward each of the six videos.

Chi-square tests examined whether there were differences between conditions as to which videos were selected for sharing and as favorites, given their critic and user ratings. There was no overall difference for which videos were shared, $\chi^2(5, N = 122) = 8.41, p = .14$. However, videos rated 5 x 5 (highly prestigious and highly popular) were twice as likely to be selected for sharing in the treatment group that had anticipated sharing video as part of the discussion task (see Table A.10). With regard to self-reported favorite videos, the chi-square test was not significant, $\chi^2(5, N = 122) = 4.76, p = .45$, but a similar pattern was send for highly prestigious and popular videos, between conditions
(see Table A.10). For 80% of participants, their sharing intentions matched their favorite video. Furthermore, highly rated videos were not especially likely to be chosen in combination with poorly rated favorites, suggesting limited selectivity in sharing intentions.

Next, with regard to attitudes toward each video, a mixed effects ANOVA (critic rating x user rating x condition) was constructed that was similar to Model 1 reported above, but using attitudes rather than selective exposure as the within-subjects dependent variables. Results were very similar to those obtained for selective exposure, with main effects of critic rating, $F(1, 120) = 16.39, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .12$, and user rating, $F(2, 240) = 10.49, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .08$. Similarly, there was an effect of condition on exposure to videos by user rating, $F(2, 240) = 3.14, p = .045, \eta^2_p = .03$, but none between condition and critic rating, $F(1, 120) = 0.78, p = .38, \eta^2_p = .01$. There was no interaction between critic and user ratings, $F(2, 240) = 0.18, p = .83, \eta^2_p = .002$, or with condition, $F(2, 240) = 0.76, p = .47, \eta^2_p = .01$. Figure B.8 illustrates these effects. Additionally, the relationship between attitude toward a video and selective exposure to that video was modest, all zero-order correlations ranged from $r = .20, p = .03$, to $r = .48, p < .001$.

**Need for cognition as moderator.** As with the earlier analyses of attitudes and norms, regression models with hierarchical entry were constructed to further examine the curvilinear interaction between need for cognition and user ratings in predicting selective exposure, as reported in ANCOVA Model 2 above. Low and high prestige, as well as low, moderate, and high popularity browsing were all used as dependent variables in a series of five regression models. The first block of variables included the covariates of
condition, sex, age, self-esteem, extraversion, neuroticism, Internet use, sharing
propensity, informational control, attitudes, and norms (i.e., the same regression models
reported above to test attitudes and norms). The next step consisted of need for cognition.
The results indicate that individuals with a greater need for cognition spent less time
viewing moderately popular videos and more time viewing highly popular videos,
compared to the browsing patterns of individuals with a lower need for cognition (see
middle panel in Table A.9).

**Enjoyment, impression motivation, and publicness as moderators.** Several
other potential moderating variables were examined, building on the mixed effects
ANCOVA, Model 3, reported above. Among enjoyment of the browsing session,
impression motivation, and perceived publicness of video browsing, only one interaction
emerged as significant. Enjoyment moderated critic ratings’ effect on selective exposure,
\[ F(1, 107) = 5.12, \ p = .03, \ \eta^2_p = .05. \] Otherwise, these variables did not moderate rating
effects, or condition effects, on selective exposure. As with need for cognition, as set of
regression models building on those used to test attitudes and norms examined the
direction of enjoyment’s effect. Much like need for cognition, greater enjoyment
predicted less exposure to moderate-popularity videos and more exposure to high-
popularity videos (see bottom panel in Table A.9).

**Manipulation Checks**

**Between subjects.** Stimuli pretesting had established that the video browsing was
perceived as more public and more impression motivating in the anticipated sharing
condition than in the control condition. This was also examined post-exposure for the
main study participants with independent samples t-tests. Those in the sharing condition perceived more their video exposure as more public, $t(120) = 2.78, p = .006, M_{\text{sharing}} = 4.98, SD = 1.20$, versus $M_{\text{control}} = 4.39, SD = 1.11$. However, they did not report a significant difference in impression motivation, $t(120) = 0.82, p = .42, M_{\text{sharing}} = 4.58, SD = 0.99$, versus $M_{\text{control}} = 4.43, SD = 1.12$.

In addition, there were no differences in enjoyment of the video session, $t(120) = -0.77, p = .44$, or attitude toward sharing videos with other participants, $t(120) = -0.22, p = .82$. There was, however, a negative effect of anticipated sharing on willingness to comply with injunctive norms, $t(120) = -2.16, p = .03, M_{\text{sharing}} = 2.88, SD = 1.29$, versus $M_{\text{control}} = 3.42, SD = 1.45$. This may speak to the negative effect of willingness to comply on selective exposure to high prestige videos.

**Within subjects.** The single item manipulation checks of perceived prestige and popularity for the six different combinations of video ratings were examined with a 2 x 3 (critic rating x user rating) repeated-measures ANOVA. As with the stimuli pretesting, there were inadvertent effects on critic ratings on perceived popularity and user ratings on perceived prestige. However, their effect sizes were relatively smaller than those of the intended manipulations. For popularity, there was a strong effect of user ratings, $F(2, 242) = 822.46, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .87$, along with an effect of critic ratings, $F(1, 121) = 137.43, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .53$. An interaction was also evident, $F(2, 242) = 18.18, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .13$. Likewise, critic ratings had a strong effect on prestige, $F(1, 121) = 400.31, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .77$, and user ratings had an effect, too, $F(2, 242) = 85.93, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .42$. Their interaction was significant, $F(2, 242) = 9.76, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .07$. These suggest a
more pronounced, if not totally separated, manipulation of ratings compared to the stimuli pretests. The means for each rating combination are presented in Table A.11.
Chapter 5: Discussion

To test predictions about how individuals would engage in selective exposure to videos rating as low and high on prestige, and low, moderate, and high on popularity, an experiment with between-subjects and within-subjects factors was conducted. Participants spent five minutes freely browsing a video website. Those in the treatment group anticipated sharing a video with an online discussion group, while the control condition viewed the site as an alleged alternative distracter task. In addition to this experimental induction of anticipated taste performances, other variables such attitudes, norms, and individual differences were examined as predictors of selective exposure.

There were clear effects of the video ratings on selective exposure. More time was spent viewing high prestige versus low prestige videos, and the three levels of popularity had positive linear effect on selective exposure. Prestige and popularity did not interact to predict selectivity. These effects build on prior work in news settings that have made use of unobtrusive measurement of freely-chosen news stories (e.g., Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2005; Messing & Westwood, in press) by examining bandwagons effects in the entertainment domain. Fu (2012) investigated bandwagon effects in online video websites, but the present experimental design offers stronger causal evidence that ratings truly drive selection—as opposed to other factors that might be confounded with aggregate ratings (such as content quality) in a field study. The current study also extends
the selective exposure paradigm (Knobloch-Westerwick, in press) by incorporating online video content, a valuable extension to this methodological approach that could be used to investigate a wide variety of selective exposure effects in the future. Additionally, the present study investigated not only bandwagon effects, but also the influence of status-relevant information in selective exposure. Just as others’ aggregate evaluations of video clips drove selective exposure, so did critics’ aggregate evaluations. More prestigious videos were consistently more viewed compared to less prestigious videos, regardless of user ratings. Prestige is thus a characteristic of media content that warrants further empirical research.

On the other hand, most of the subsequent hypothesis about how social influences encourage the consumption of media based on prestige and popularity ratings were not clearly supported. Several qualified effects were seen in the attempt to use either impression management or the integrated behavioral model to explain social influence on media use. While the anticipation of sharing a video as a taste performance with an online group did have an effect on selective exposure, and it was a curvilinear effect, the direction of the effect was a surprise, given the predictions derived from impression management and optimal distinctiveness theories. The control condition spent more time viewing moderately popular videos, while these were relatively avoided in the sharing condition. Despite this surprise, there was a notable amount of time spent on highly popular videos in the sharing condition, suggesting that some impression motivation may have been at work.
Similarly, the results for hypotheses derived from the integrated behavioral model were surprising. While attitudes performed as the theory would suggest they should, willingness to comply with norms was associated with more selective exposure to low prestige videos. Additionally, there were no effects of attitudes and subjective norms on browsing by popularity rating. With regard to the negative effect of norms, a number of explanations are possible. One is that those individuals who are highly conformist (i.e., high on willingness to comply with norms) are less averse to lowbrow content than non-conformist individuals, given that lowbrow media may be perceived as popular or “normal” nonetheless. However, the inclusion of highbrow referents (e.g., professional critics, tastemakers) in the willingness to comply measure, as well as the lack of norm effects on popular video viewing, suggest this is not necessarily the case.

Another explanation is consistent with optimal distinctiveness theory. Perhaps individuals high on willingness to comply are indeed typically quite conformist in their media use, but given the need to maintain optimal distinctiveness (being both an included group member but also a distinct individual at the same time; Brewer, 1991), consuming less prestigious media allows them to exercise some level of differentiation. Likewise, those who are less willing to comply with norms may have exhibited selective exposure to highly prestigious media because this type of media usage provides them with an acceptable means of conforming to established tastes and feeling included in a group, in order to optimally balance out their otherwise strong tendency towards distinctiveness.

It is notable that impression management factors impacted popularity-driven selective exposure, and that integrated behavioral model factors impacted prestige-driven
selective exposure. Although these two theoretical perspectives were situated as alternative explanations for selective exposure behavior in this study, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive explanations. Instead, each seemed to be relevant to a different dimension of others’ evaluations of media content (i.e., popularity and prestige).

Two curvilinear effects did emerge from unexpected moderators: need for cognition and enjoyment. High scores on these variables were associated less moderately popular video exposure and more highly popular video exposure. Surprisingly, the traits of self-monitoring and need for cognition did not perform as expected, and did not moderate selective exposure.

The presence of rating-driven selective exposure, yet the general absence of clear impression motivated or norm-driven effects, suggest either some other mechanism of social influence, or that most of the variance in rating-driven selectivity is explained by the use of these cues to identify quality, useful, or enjoyable media. In this way, media users may be more focused on learning about what to choose (cf. Bandura, 1986) than conforming to others’ taste or trying to distinguish themselves through their own taste performances. For example, Fu (2012) found that the absence of cues like descriptions and thumbnails led to more use of bandwagon heuristics for video sites. This suggests bandwagon cues might largely provide information about the videos, if they become less valuable when other cues about content are present. On the other, to the extent that impression management and normative influence do play a role, perhaps they would be more evident when existing quality cues are apparent (or even when individuals already
know quite a bit about the media content in question). Future research should vary the information provided about media content presented for selection.

Indeed, there are a number of limitations of the current study that should be addressed, and that may account for the inconsistent and unsupportive results. First of all, despite their revision and testing, the experimental inductions presented challenges to the study. The operationalizations of prestige and popularity, the critic and user ratings, influenced each other. Future research might explore how prestige and popularity are related, but ideally they would be manipulated in a completely independent manner. Specifying a more particular source of ratings than “users” and “critics” from “across the web” could also enhance these manipulations. Ratings may have more influence if they are perceived as being attributed to particular valued groups (e.g., other college students, or critics from particular publications). A related limitation is that subjective norms were only measured with regard to willingness to comply with norms, and not also with beliefs about what those particular injunctive or descriptive norms were. Just as specifying who is providing the evaluations used in cues associated with media content might moderate the response to those cues, specifying what exactly the sources of subjective norms (i.e., others) think about the consumption of particular media is valuable to understanding willingness to comply with those norms in the first place. Future research in this area should ensure that both beliefs about others and willingness to comply are accounted for when considering the role of subjective norms in selective exposure.

Next, the induction of anticipated sharing underperformed in the post-test manipulation check. While the treatment condition was seen as more public than the
control condition, just as in the stimuli pretests, the measure of impression motivation did not differ between groups, even though it had consistently differed when rated by participants during stimuli development. It is thus likely that participants felt their video browsing was relatively public when anticipated sharing was induced, but that they were not especially motivated to make a positive impression on their online group discussants. Post-hoc analyses examined impression motivation as a possibly moderator of condition effects, but was nonsignificant. Motivation may have suffered from a floor effect, given the lack of a difference in impression motivation between groups in the posttest manipulation check. Future work should develop a stronger induction of impression motivation. Furthermore, subsequent research should also directly measure beliefs about anticipated future interactions and other aspects of the social situation, not only to ensure their effective manipulation, but also to examine whether variability in these perceptions influences selectivity in media choice.

Another possible limitation of the current study is the sample size. With 127 participants, power analysis conducted in G*Power 3.1 yields 90% power to detect a medium-sized between-subjects effect (as small as $d = .580$). The power to detect a small effect ($d = .20$) was weak, at 20.1%. On the other hand, a power analysis considering the inclusion of the six within-subjects factors showed that the study had 90% power to detect within-between interactions with small effect sizes ($f = .104$).

Furthermore, the use of novel stimuli that purposefully selected to be low to moderate on enjoyment may have limited the extent to which participants felt they could actually engage in taste performances that could enhance their self-presentation. Future
research could further enhance ecologically validity by making use of familiar stimuli that have existing levels of popularity and prestige within particular social groups. This would allow for testing effects in a setting where media content have far more power to signal identity and to yield rewards in impression management. However, this approach also presents a number of design challenges itself, as it highly sensitive to particular contexts and is less subject to experimental control. Additionally, individuals might be more motivated in their daily life to engage in impression management or norm compliance when it comes to media use, as they are interacting in social media with their actual social networks. This would enhance the believability of the experimental situation, compared to the highly controlled but fairly artificial situation used in the present design. However, the present design attempted to maximize the potential for impression motivation by creating a situation where the stakes for successful impression motivation were meaningful. Future research should make use of existing social networks (e.g., anticipated discussions could occur within a set of classmates or colleagues.

Finally, the use of college student participants limits the generalizability of the findings. Although this group is especially likely to engage in the use of social media and identity development and impression management through conspicuous consumption, and thus very appropriate for testing these processes, effects could be stronger among this group for that very reason. However, the use of statistical controls for Internet use, age, and other individual differences aids in identifying effects that are not confounded by participant characteristics, to the extent that there is good variability in the sample. Future research should examine the potential for impression motivated selective exposure among
different age groups and social groups, but perhaps even more importantly, the consequences of heterogeneous social networks on these effects, as diverse interpersonal audiences influence online impression management concerns and strategies (Marwick & boyd, 2011).

The present study contributes to selective exposure research by examining potential social influences on selectivity, especially in the sort of converged environment where interpersonal concerns and media consumption interact. It also adds to the extensive body of research on online impression motivation by considering and testing the role of anticipated self-presentation in prior behaviors that are likely to lead to sharing behaviors or that might leave behavioral traces behind. It also attempts to integrate optimal distinctiveness into our understanding of online impression management, and considers how an alternative theoretical approach, the integrated behavioral model, might instead account for this particular set of social behaviors online.

As media users continue to share more of their consumption behavior with their online social networks, it is important to understand how these practices may come to bear on patterns of media consumption. This study is an important step in outlining and documenting the implications of online taste performances for selective exposure to media. It demonstrates that online media users will spend more time viewing content that is highly popular with other users and rated as prestigious by critics. Furthermore, impression management, attitudes and norms, and individual differences all influence this selectivity, but often in unexpected ways. When taste performances are anticipated and impression management concerns are thus activated, individuals are likely to spend more
like viewing highly popular content, but less likely to exhibit the optimal distinctiveness pattern that might be expected. Those individuals high on need for cognition and enjoyment of the viewing experience also gravitate toward highly popular fare and are less interested in moderately popular fare than other individuals. The interface between impression management and optimal distinctiveness is a promising path for future research into media use and consumer behavior, and the present study points to intriguing, counterintuitive directions that merit further theoretical development. Additionally, the negative impact of norms on the viewing of prestigious fare is an interesting finding that should be explored further. Previous research drawing from the integrated behavioral model’s family of theories has typically only considered the role of attitudes in media selection and use. The present results show that attitudes predict media use as might be expected, but that there is countervailing effect of willingness to comply with norms. Potential mechanisms for this effect must be explored, and the implications for the integrated behavioral model in general, and its ability to predict the behavior of media audiences in particular, should also be developed.
References


online exchange on selective exposure to online news. Paper presented at the 54th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.


Kim, Y. (2011). The contribution of social network sites to exposure to political difference: The relationships among SNSs, online political messaging, and exposure to cross-cutting perspectives. *Computers in Human Behavior, 27*(2), 971-977.


Appendix A: Tables

Table A.1

*Pretest I Results for Video Clip Stimuli*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Title</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th></th>
<th>Popularity</th>
<th></th>
<th>Prestige</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sizzle &amp; Depth</td>
<td>4.04&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>3.32&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>4.45&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Super Supercapacitor</td>
<td>3.41&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>2.98&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>4.03&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Knife Maker</td>
<td>3.72&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>3.35&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>3.79&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Live the Kings</td>
<td>3.55&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>3.43&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>3.81&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime</td>
<td>4.29&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>3.65&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>4.10&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeway: A Skydiving Story</td>
<td>4.64&lt;sup&gt;ac&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>4.29&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>4.35&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share the Pie</td>
<td>3.43&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>3.38&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>3.90&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airstream Living</td>
<td>4.04&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>3.39&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>3.96&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray: A Life Underwater</td>
<td>3.34&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>3.07&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>3.95&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living on Ice</td>
<td>3.69&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>3.22&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>3.87&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casteller</td>
<td>4.99&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>4.81&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>4.38&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of a Book</td>
<td>4.39&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>3.44&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>4.46&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* N = 27. Means within a column that do not share a superscript differ at p < .05.
Table A.2

Pretest 1 Results for Draft Experimental Inductions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition Script</th>
<th>Publicness</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Impression Motivation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Induction</td>
<td>3.87\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.35\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Induction</td>
<td>4.96\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.93\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automatic Sharing Induction</td>
<td>4.83\textsuperscript{ab}</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.92\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Note.} N = 27. Means within a column that do not share a superscript differ at \( p < .05 \).
Table A.3

*Pretest 1 Results for Draft Video Ratings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Perceptions</th>
<th>1x1 M (SD)</th>
<th>1x3 M (SD)</th>
<th>1x5 M (SD)</th>
<th>5x1 M (SD)</th>
<th>5x3 M (SD)</th>
<th>5x5 M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Popularity</td>
<td>1.84(^a) (1.19)</td>
<td>3.44(^b) (1.39)</td>
<td>4.89(^{cd}) (1.48)</td>
<td>3.38(^b) (1.53)</td>
<td>4.23(^{hc}) (1.35)</td>
<td>5.75(^d) (1.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>2.12(^a) (1.30)</td>
<td>2.99(^{ab}) (1.29)</td>
<td>3.95(^{be}) (1.04)</td>
<td>4.44(^c) (1.51)</td>
<td>4.72(^{ed}) (1.46)</td>
<td>5.55(^d) (1.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive Norms</td>
<td>2.16(^a) (1.22)</td>
<td>3.31(^b) (0.95)</td>
<td>4.53(^c) (1.29)</td>
<td>3.18(^b) (1.20)</td>
<td>4.40(^c) (1.25)</td>
<td>5.82(^d) (1.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injunctive Norms</td>
<td>2.14(^a) (1.30)</td>
<td>3.40(^b) (1.25)</td>
<td>4.43(^c) (1.14)</td>
<td>3.43(^{hc}) (1.25)</td>
<td>4.56(^c) (0.93)</td>
<td>5.77(^d) (1.35)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* N = 27. 1x3 = 1 star from critics, 3 stars from users, etc. Means within a row that do not share a superscript differ at p < .05.
Table A.4

*Pretest 2 Results for Revised Experimental Inductions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition Script</th>
<th>Publicness</th>
<th>Impression Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Induction</td>
<td>3.41$^a$</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Induction</td>
<td>5.47$^b$</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automatic Sharing Induction</td>
<td>5.73$^b$</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* $N = 29$. Means within a column that do not share a superscript differ at $p < .05$. 
### Table A.5

*Pretest 2 Results for Revised Video Ratings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Perceptions</th>
<th>1x1 $M$ (SD)</th>
<th>1x3 $M$ (SD)</th>
<th>1x5 $M$ (SD)</th>
<th>5x1 $M$ (SD)</th>
<th>5x3 $M$ (SD)</th>
<th>5x5 $M$ (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Popularity</td>
<td>1.66&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; (1.11)</td>
<td>3.41&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (1.04)</td>
<td>4.80&lt;sup&gt;ed&lt;/sup&gt; (1.71)</td>
<td>2.61&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (1.35)</td>
<td>4.31&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt; (1.33)</td>
<td>5.20&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt; (1.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>1.96&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; (1.27)</td>
<td>2.59&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; (1.03)</td>
<td>3.78&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (1.43)</td>
<td>4.04&lt;sup&gt;bc&lt;/sup&gt; (1.76)</td>
<td>4.81&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt; (1.55)</td>
<td>4.86&lt;sup&gt;bc&lt;/sup&gt; (1.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive Norms</td>
<td>1.87&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; (1.13)</td>
<td>3.09&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (1.19)</td>
<td>4.27&lt;sup&gt;ed&lt;/sup&gt; (1.33)</td>
<td>3.56&lt;sup&gt;bc&lt;/sup&gt; (1.50)</td>
<td>4.58&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt; (1.20)</td>
<td>4.85&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt; (1.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injunctive Norms</td>
<td>1.82&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; (1.12)</td>
<td>2.85&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (1.28)</td>
<td>3.93&lt;sup&gt;ed&lt;/sup&gt; (1.40)</td>
<td>3.48&lt;sup&gt;bc&lt;/sup&gt; (1.58)</td>
<td>4.33&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt; (1.19)</td>
<td>4.75&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt; (1.54)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 29. 1x3 = 1 star from critics, 3 stars from users, etc. Means within a row that do not share a superscript differ at $p < .05$.***
Table A.6

**Correlations Between Study Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.24**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.15+</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Need for Cognition</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Extraversion</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.34****</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Neuroticism</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.59****</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.35***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Internet Use</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sharing Propensity</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Information Control</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.35****</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.40****</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Attitude</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.17+</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Norms</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Self-Monitoring</td>
<td>-.15+</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.15+</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Need for Uniqueness</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Impression Motivation</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.69****</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Publicness</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.17+</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.33***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Enjoyment</td>
<td>-.15+</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.31****</td>
<td>.28**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 127. +p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.*
Table A.7

*Selective Exposure Results for Nested Mixed Effects ANCOVA Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critic Rating</td>
<td>11.17**</td>
<td>9.50**</td>
<td>12.40**</td>
<td>11.31**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Rating</td>
<td>12.25***</td>
<td>9.52***</td>
<td>8.30***</td>
<td>8.38***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critic*User</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition*Critic</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition*User</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>2.63+</td>
<td>3.11*</td>
<td>2.99+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition<em>Critic</em>User</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude*Critic</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.58**</td>
<td>6.29*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude*User</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms*Critic</td>
<td>7.48**</td>
<td>8.01**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms*User</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM<em>Condition</em>Critic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM<em>Condition</em>User</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NfU<em>Condition</em>Critic</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NfU<em>Condition</em>User</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NfU<em>Condition</em>Critic*User</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. F*-values (see text for more details). All models use seconds spent browsing articles as dependent variable. Models 2-4 include sex, age, self-esteem, need for cognition, extraversion, neuroticism, Internet use, online sharing propensity, and informational control as mean-centered covariates. Model 3 introduces attitudes and norms, and Model 4 introduces self-monitoring (SM) and need for uniqueness (NfU), as mean-centered predictors. +p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selective Exposure</th>
<th>1x1</th>
<th>1x3</th>
<th>1x5</th>
<th>5x1</th>
<th>5x3</th>
<th>5x5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$ (SD)</td>
<td>$M$ (SD)</td>
<td>$M$ (SD)</td>
<td>$M$ (SD)</td>
<td>$M$ (SD)</td>
<td>$M$ (SD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control Condition</th>
<th>Sharing Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$30.95^a$ (39.46)</td>
<td>$35.24^a$ (39.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$35.89^{ab}$ (41.40)</td>
<td>$29.73^a$ (39.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$45.27^{ab}$ (45.63)</td>
<td>$47.79^{ab}$ (44.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$30.48^a$ (40.82)</td>
<td>$37.35^a$ (39.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$53.17^{ab}$ (45.11)</td>
<td>$43.51^{ab}$ (42.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$55.45^b$ (44.41)</td>
<td>$66.11^b$ (41.27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control Condition</th>
<th>Sharing Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$30.95^{ab}$ (39.46)</td>
<td>$35.24^a$ (39.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$35.89^{abc}$ (41.40)</td>
<td>$29.73^a$ (39.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$45.27^{abc}$ (45.63)</td>
<td>$47.79^{ab}$ (44.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$30.48^a$ (40.82)</td>
<td>$37.35^a$ (39.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$53.17^b$ (45.11)</td>
<td>$43.51^{ab}$ (42.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$55.45^c$ (44.41)</td>
<td>$66.11^b$ (41.27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control Condition</th>
<th>Sharing Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$28.52^a$ (38.51)</td>
<td>$35.39^a$ (39.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$36.16^{abc}$ (41.96)</td>
<td>$28.66^a$ (38.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$42.95^{abc}$ (45.34)</td>
<td>$49.36^{ab}$ (44.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$31.98^{ab}$ (41.24)</td>
<td>$36.95^a$ (39.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$55.78^c$ (44.59)</td>
<td>$44.93^{ab}$ (42.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$55.18^{bc}$ (44.45)</td>
<td>$64.90^b$ (41.39)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 127. 1x3 = 1 star from critics, 3 stars from users, etc. Means within a row that do not share a superscript differ at $p < .05.$*
Table A.9

Selective Exposure Results for Regression Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models including attitudes and norms</th>
<th>Low Prestige</th>
<th>High Prestige</th>
<th>Low Popularity</th>
<th>Moderate Popularity</th>
<th>High Popularity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>-12.18 (5.85)</td>
<td>15.84 (6.29)</td>
<td>-1.40 (6.16)</td>
<td>3.36 (5.97)</td>
<td>1.83 (6.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>8.37 (3.81)</td>
<td>-9.72 (4.10)</td>
<td>-2.90 (4.01)</td>
<td>-0.50 (3.89)</td>
<td>1.86 (4.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>-.24*</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \Delta R^2 )</td>
<td>.05*</td>
<td>.07*</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models including need for cognition</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NfC</td>
<td>-1.81 (8.88)</td>
<td>-7.20 (9.56)</td>
<td>0.91 (9.36)</td>
<td>-30.01 (9.07)</td>
<td>20.12 (10.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.33*</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \Delta R^2 )</td>
<td>.0003</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.0001</td>
<td>.08**</td>
<td>.03*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models including enjoyment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>-2.54 (4.10)</td>
<td>6.34 (3.93)</td>
<td>3.01 (4.41)</td>
<td>-4.81 (3.87)</td>
<td>11.54 (4.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \Delta R^2 )</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Unstandardized coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses. Standardized coefficients in italics. The \( R^2 \) in the first step of each model refers to variance explained by covariates, including condition, sex, age, self-esteem, extraversion, neuroticism, Internet use, online sharing propensity, and informational control (as well as need for cognition in first and third sets of models, and attitudes and norms in second and third sets of models). *\( p < .05 \), **\( p < .01 \).
Table A.10

*Selection of Videos for Sharing and as Favorites*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>1x1</th>
<th>1x3</th>
<th>1x5</th>
<th>5x1</th>
<th>5x3</th>
<th>5x5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared in Control Condition</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared in Sharing Condition</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorite in Control Condition</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorite in Sharing Condition</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 122. 1x3 = 1 star from critics, 3 stars from users, etc.*
Table A.11

*Manipulation Check of Video Ratings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Perceptions</th>
<th>1x1 M (SD)</th>
<th>1x3 M (SD)</th>
<th>1x5 M (SD)</th>
<th>5x1 M (SD)</th>
<th>5x3 M (SD)</th>
<th>5x5 M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Popularity</td>
<td>1.51(^a) (0.93)</td>
<td>3.57(^b) (1.11)</td>
<td>6.11(^c) (1.31)</td>
<td>2.89(^d) (1.59)</td>
<td>5.21(^e) (1.14)</td>
<td>6.80(^f) (0.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>1.64(^a) (1.02)</td>
<td>2.70(^b) (1.38)</td>
<td>3.29(^c) (1.91)</td>
<td>5.43(^d) (1.82)</td>
<td>5.75(^d) (1.33)</td>
<td>6.71(^e) (0.87)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* \(N = 122\). 1x3 = 1 star from critics, 3 stars from users, etc. Means within a row that do not share a superscript differ at \(p < .05\).
Appendix B: Figures

Figure B.1. Example Overview Page from Study Website
Figure B.2. Example Video Page from Study Website
Figure B.3. Effects of Condition and Video Ratings on Selective Exposure, With Controls
Figure B.4. Selective Exposure to Videos by Prestige, Over Time (Control Condition)
Figure B.5. Selective Exposure to Videos by Prestige, Over Time (Sharing Condition)
Figure B.6. Selective Exposure to Videos by Popularity, Over Time (Control Condition)
Figure B.7. Selective Exposure to Videos by Popularity, Over Time (Sharing Condition)
Figure B.8. Effects of Condition and Video Ratings on Attitudes Toward Videos
Appendix C: Video Ratings (Within-Subjects Stimuli)

Draft Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avg. Critic Rating</th>
<th>Avg. User Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revised Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critics</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Critics</th>
<th>Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Sources for Video Clips

90-second video clips were edited from the following short films.

*Sizzle & Depth* [http://vimeo.com/78120465](http://vimeo.com/78120465)


*The Knife Maker* [http://vimeo.com/31455885](http://vimeo.com/31455885)

*Long Live the Kings* [http://vimeo.com/49445992](http://vimeo.com/49445992)

*Prime* [http://vimeo.com/35965635](http://vimeo.com/35965635)


*Share the Pie* [http://vimeo.com/31170981](http://vimeo.com/31170981)

*Airstream Living* [http://vimeo.com/28995997](http://vimeo.com/28995997)


*Living on Ice* [http://vimeo.com/21195976](http://vimeo.com/21195976)

*Casteller* [http://vimeo.com/16392519](http://vimeo.com/16392519)

Appendix E: Induction Scripts (Between-Subjects Stimuli)

Verbal Cover Story Script (Same Across All Conditions)

We’re ready to get started. Thank you for coming in – this is “Online Group Discussions,” Study 139. Before we begin, please remember to turn off your cell phones and other electronic devices. The study needs your full attention, so we need to avoid any distractions.

We are conducting research to investigate how people engage in online group discussions and how they evaluate each other.

In this session, you will be part of an online discussion group with students in different locations. You’ll be asked to discuss a number of topics.

While we wait for everyone to log in and create their account, you might also be given a separate task to work on while you wait.

Before we begin, please locate the trackpad on your laptop computer. You will use this to scroll and click throughout the different parts of the study.

Remember, it is absolutely crucial that you are not distracted while taking the session. Please read all directions very thoroughly, and follow the instructions carefully.

When you’re finished with the session, gather your belongings quietly, and I’ll see you on your way out. If you have any questions during the study, please raise your hand.

Okay, please put on your headphones, and click on the link labeled “Online Group Discussions” in the upper right hand corner of the desktop. You may begin.
Cover Story Script (Same Across All Conditions)

Before you begin, it is vital that the study has your full attention. Please turn off and stow away any mobile phones, electronic devices, and any other personal items that could be a distraction.

Please read all directions very carefully and take your time.

Your online discussion group may be given an audiovisual task. Please put the headphones on securely, and check that the volume is at a comfortable level.

This study examines how people communicate with each other in computer-mediated settings such as discussion forums and online chats. We are examining how online group members talk to each other over time and what leads to effective discussion and decision-making.

In this study, you will have the opportunity to interact with an online discussion group. Group members are student participants from both communication and psychology classes at The Ohio State University (OSU) as well as from our research partner, New York University (NYU). About five students from each school will be assigned to each online discussion group.

Your discussion group will discuss several topics and work through a problem-solving task. Each group member will create his or her own personal profile page in the survey software before the first discussion session. Once everyone has created their profile and logged into software’s group discussion feature, the discussion topics and task will be introduced.

At the end of today’s group discussion, you will rate your fellow participants on various aspects of their communicative and cooperative abilities.

We will also ask you to schedule a follow-up discussion and problem-solving task for your discussion group. This additional session will revisit some of the topics and problems from today’s session, as well as several new issues.
Upon completion of both today’s session and the follow-up session, the discussant rated very highly by their group members will receive a $20 gift card from Amazon.com.

You are now ready to create your personal profile page. Please fill out each field in full, in order to provide your discussion group members with information about yourself.

### Profile fields.

You are now ready to create your personal profile page. Please fill out each field in full, in order to provide your discussion group members with information about yourself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year (e.g., sophomore)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hometown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your hobbies?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the most recent job (paid or unpaid) you had?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your career plans?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you like most about working in a group?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you dislike most about working in a group?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Profile generation.
Your profile is now being generated.

Click below to continue.

Status: profile generating…
Status: 6/10 profiles complete…

Please click the forward button to continue and to view other complete profiles.

Fictitious profiles.

Emma Ridenhour

**University:** OSU  
**Major:** Communication  
**Year:** Junior

**Gender:** Female  
**Hometown:** Dayton, OH

**Hobbies:** I spent a lot of time volunteering with youth mentoring and other community organizations. I also collect vinyl records - I have quite a few.

**Recent Job:** I spent the summer working as an assistant at a magazine.

**Career Plans:** I would like to be a working journalist for a large national magazine and or newspaper. Maybe an editor some day.

**Like About Groups:** Group collaborations are exciting when you’re able to create something that is more than the sum of its parts, and everyone involved is contributing something that creates a larger vision. Being able to combine people’s talents can lead to something meaningful.

**Dislike About Groups:** What I dislike about working with a group is when people have bad attitudes toward working together, and aren’t willing to cooperate and compromise. If you’re going to get something done, you have to get along and think through things.
**Sara Ramsey**

**University:** OSU  
**Major:** Psychology  
**Year:** Sophomore  
**Gender:** Female  
**Hometown:** Dublin, OH

Hobbies: I play intramural soccer a couple of times a week. I also enjoy traveling when I can.

Recent Job: I work as an office administrator 20 hours a week. It's okay, and at least it pays well.

Career Plans: My plan is to either go to graduate school to become a psychologist or work in industry as a consultant.

Like About Groups: I like group projects because people bring their energies and the work is spread across different people. When you have more people, and they are well-coordinated, you’re able to accomplish a lot more. Sometimes individual projects can be tedious, but there is a momentum with group work.

Dislike About Groups: I’m often annoyed by group members when they don’t seem to have any knowledge about the project or even the class topic. If you’re working with people who don’t know what they’re doing, and can’t really add anything, it really holds the group back.

**Updates**

---

**Raymond Doty**

**University:** OSU  
**Major:** Marketing  
**Year:** Junior  
**Gender:** Male  
**Hometown:** Chicago, IL

Hobbies: I am really into photography. I’ve been taking photos with different cameras since I was young, and now I’m really into different lighting and exposures. I like and go to festivals with friends and sometimes take photos.

Recent Job: I was an intern at the Ogilvy & Mather ad agency last year.

Career Plans: I would like to do marketing for start-up companies, to help entrepreneurs with exciting ideas get off the ground and capture emerging markets.

Like About Groups: Groups are good when people get along and have a positive attitude toward the project. That way, it’s more like you’re hanging and brainstorming than doing work beside. It makes a project more enjoyable if you can work with other people who are enthusiastic and want to get a good grade.

Dislike About Groups: I don’t know if I guess my preference is to work with people that I know and like. Sometimes group are randomly assigned, and it’s just annoying to have to get to know someone and what their style is while trying to do some complicated task.
Jeffrey Ashton

UNIVERSITY: NYU  MAJOR: COMMUNICATION  YEAR: SOPHOMORE  GENDER: MALE  HOMETOWN: ASHEVILLE, NC

Hobbies: Ever since moving to the Northeast, I have been really into skiing and snowboarding. I spend time coding and designing websites for friends.

Recent Job: I interned at an NBC affiliate television station for a semester.

Career Plans: I would like to work for a major public relations firm, working with a variety of clients.

Like About Groups: Group work is good when other people know their stuff. Working with knowledgeable people can help you learn a lot of things outside of the classroom, and improves your own quality of work through the discussion process and different kinds of collaborations.

Dislike About Groups: I am frustrated by group work when I can’t trust my collaborators. When I’m working on a group project, being able to rely on someone and know they will come through is critical. Sometimes you just can’t depend on people to do a good job.

Valerie Tabb

UNIVERSITY: NYU  MAJOR: ART  YEAR: JUNIOR  GENDER: FEMALE  HOMETOWN: BOSTON, MA

Hobbies: I enjoy keeping up with film. I go to the cinema several times a week and I have a large Blu-ray collection. I try to attend theatre whenever I can, too.

Recent Job: I work in an art gallery part-time, and I also work as a server for catering parties on the weekends.

Career Plans: I plan to do graphic design as a career, but I have thought about teaching, too.

Like About Groups: I find group work enjoyable if you have enough time to establish a rapport with the members and get to know people. You develop a level of trust, and people understand each other and the project in a way that makes cooperation possible and leads to good results.

Dislike About Groups: It’s when other group members don’t take the project seriously. I mean, we’re all being graded on this, and it’s usually a lot of points. Why not do a good job? I guess some people don’t care about their grades, and when people don’t have a good attitude it makes things difficult for everyone else involved.
Glenn Talbot

UNIVERSITY: NYU
MAJOR: Film
YEAR: Senior

GENDER: MALE
HOMETOWN: Ithaca, NY

Hobbies: I volunteer with a group that cleans up local rivers and wetlands.

Recent Job: I have worked as a production assistant on a number of independent films. The pay isn't great, but it's the kind of work I have to do to eventually make a name in my field.

Career Plans: I would like to direct independent dramatic and comedic films.

Like About Groups: I've generally had good experiences with collaborative teams. Usually the people have positive attitudes, and I think that makes all the difference. If you're willing to listen to other people and keep an open mind, and to pull your weight, you'll be a good teammate. Having a number of people with positive outlooks working together tends to lead to good things.

Dislike About Groups: I dislike group projects when other people don't know how to make a meaningful contribution. A good group has people contributing different skills to the whole. If someone doesn't really have anything to add, or makes lots of mistakes, it's really upsetting and possibly disruptive when you're trying to do something quality.
Draft of Control Condition Script

Several group members are still completing their profile pages. Once they have finished, it will only take a few minutes for the software’s discussion feature to initialize.

While you wait, we can provide you with a separate short task.

We are testing a video website as part of a second study. Therefore, you’ll take part in a quick survey to help evaluate the video site.

Continue to the video site survey at the following URL:

<redirect>
Draft of Anticipated Sharing Condition Script

In order to begin the discussion, group members have been assigned to share several topics for discussion.

You have been selected to share a video clip with the discussion group.

The video clip you share will be viewed and discussed by the group during the beginning of the session.

More specifically, you’ll share and discuss a video clip with the discussion group. The video clip you choose will be from a video website that we are testing as part of a second study. Therefore, you’ll take part in a quick survey to help evaluate the video site.

Continue to the video site survey at the following URL:

<redirect>
Draft of Anticipated Automatic Sharing Condition

In order to begin the discussion, group members have been assigned to test out several websites for discussion.

You have been selected to test a video website. You’ll be asked to evaluate the site and discuss it.

Additionally, which video clips you view will be visible to the group and automatically embedded in your profile.

More specifically, information about which videos you view will be automatically posted to your profile page and visible to the group while you’re browsing a video website that we are testing as part of a second study. Therefore, you’ll take part in a quick survey to help evaluate the video site.

Continue to the video site survey at the following URL:

<redirect>
Revised Control Condition Script  
(Ultimately Used in Experiment Control Group)

Several group members are still completing their profile pages. Once they have finished, it will only take a few minutes for the software’s discussion feature to initialize.

While you wait, we can provide you with a separate short task.

<page break>

We are testing a video website as part of a second study. You have been individually selected to now take part in a quick survey to help evaluate the video site.

Continue to the video site survey at the following URL:

<redirect>
Revised Anticipated Sharing Condition Script
(Ultimately Used in Experiment Treatment Group)

In order to begin the discussion, group members have been assigned to share several topics for discussion.

You have been individually selected to share a video clip with the discussion group.

The single video clip you choose to share will be viewed and discussed by the group during the beginning of the session.

More specifically, you’ll share and discuss a video clip with the discussion group.

The video clip you choose will be from a video website that we are testing as part of a second study. You’ll post your chosen video to the group discussion.

Therefore, you’ll now take part in a quick survey to help evaluate the video site.

Continue to the video site survey at the following URL:
Revised Anticipated Automatic Sharing Condition

In order to begin the discussion, group members have been assigned to test out several websites for discussion.

You have been individually selected to test a video website. You’ll be asked to evaluate the site and discuss it.

Additionally, any of the video clips you view will be visible to the group and automatically embedded in your profile.

More specifically, information about which video content you viewed will be automatically posted to your profile page.

These details about your viewing behavior will be visible to the group while you’re browsing a video website that we are testing as part of a second study. This information about any videos you view will remain on your personal profile.

Therefore, you’ll now take part in a quick survey to help evaluate the video site.

Continue to the video site survey at the following URL:

<redirect>
Selective Exposure Task Script (Same Across All Conditions)

Please click into the browser to activate it.

Thank you for accessing this research application. Please click next to continue.

Before you continue, please be informed that it is absolutely crucial that you are not distracted while taking the session. Distraction will be reflected in the data and will result in unusable scores.

In this next task, you will be browsing a version of “VideoTube” – a prototype of a video website for research applications. VideoTube is an aggregator, and presents clips from across the web. It also features information about video ratings and reviews and indicates how frequently videos have been viewed. You will have a brief amount of time to view the available video clips.

We would like your opinions about VideoTube and some of the video clips presented on the site. In a moment, we will ask you to spend a short amount of time browsing the site. You’ll see an overview page and several video clips. You won’t have time to watch all of the videos, because you will automatically move on to a questionnaire.

Please view what you find interesting, just as you normally would. There is no assigned number of video clips that you should watch, and you don't have to watch the videos as a whole. So, just view whatever is appealing to you, as you normally would.

To go back to the overview page from a video, just click the “Back to Overview Page” button. Do not use the browser’s back or forward buttons, and do not close the browser window during the browsing session. Just keep browsing and, after a certain amount of time, a questionnaire will load automatically.

<load VideoTube overview page>
Appendix F: Measures for Stimuli Pretests

**Video Previews**

**Perceived popularity.** Adapted from Mishra, Umesh, and Stem (1993) and Chang, Lee, and Kim (2006) into a 5-item Likert-type scale.

*Please indicate your agreement with the following statements.*

- This video is very popular.
- Most people like this video.
- Most of my friends would like this video.
- Most of my family members would like this video.

1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

**Perceived prestige.** Adapted from Vigneron and Johnson (2004) into a 5-item Likert-type scale.

- This video is highbrow.
- This video is unique.
- This video is sophisticated.
- This video is stunning.
- This video is well-regarded.

1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

**Descriptive norms.** Adapted from Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) into a 4-item Likert-type scale.

- Most people who are important to me would like this video.
- Most people whose opinions I value would like this video.
- Most people I respect and admire would like this video.
- Most people like me would like this video.

1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

**Injunctive norms.** Adapted from Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) into a 4-item Likert-type scale.

- Most people who are important to me would think I should watch this video.
- Most people whose opinions I value would think I should watch this video.
- Most people I respect and admire would think I should watch this video.
- Most people like me would think I should watch this video.

1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*
Video Clips

**Enjoyment.** The INT-ENJ subscale from Ryan (1982), as revised by McAuley, Duncan, and Tammen (1989).
I enjoyed this video very much.
Watching the video was fun.
I would describe this video as very interesting.
While watching the video, I was thinking about how much I enjoyed it.
This video did not hold my attention.*
1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

**Perceived popularity.** Adapted from Mishra, Umesh, and Stem (1993) and Chang, Lee, and Kim (2006) into a 5-item Likert-type scale.
This video is very popular.
Most people like this video.
Most of my friends would like this video.
Most of my family members would like this video.
1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

**Perceived prestige.** Adapted from Vigneron and Johnson (2004) into a 5-item Likert-type scale.
This video is highbrow.
This video is unique.
This video is sophisticated.
This video is stunning.
This video is well-regarded.
1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

**Inductions**

**Perceived publicness.** Items adapted from Gonzales and Hancock (2008) and Bateman, Pike, and Butler (2011).
The discussion group will see which video content I chose.
The video site will indicate to others which video content I viewed.
Any discussion group member could recognize which video content I selected.
The setup of the online site allows the group to see which video content I select.
1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

**Impression motivation.** Adapted from Kwon and Chon (2009).
What video content I view can enhance my self-image within the discussion group.
Watching particular video content can be a status symbol within the discussion group.
Watching video content can help me relate to the other group members.
Watching video content can help me express myself to the discussion group.
1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*
Open-ended responses. What thoughts immediately came to mind when you read about the part of the study with the video site?

Demographics
What is your sex?
Male   Female

What is your age?

Please indicate your ethnicity
Asian
Black/African-American
Hispanic/Latino
Native American
Pacific Islander
Non-Hispanic White/Caucasian
Multiracial
Other

*indicates reversed item
Appendix G: Measures for Session 1

The following questionnaire will ask you about a number of personality traits that may be relevant to the group discussion study.

**Self-esteem.** (Rosenberg, 1965).

*Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please how much you agree with each statement.*

- I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
- I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.*
- I am able to do things as well as most other people.
- I feel I do not have much to be proud of.*
- I take a positive attitude toward myself.
- On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- I wish I could have more respect for myself.*
- I certainly feel useless at times.*
- At times I think I am no good at all.*

1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*


*Read each pair of statements below and place an “X” by the one that comes closest to describing your feelings and beliefs about yourself. You may feel that neither statement describes you well, but pick the one that comes closest.*

- I really like to be the center of attention
- It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention

- I am no better or no worse than most people*
- I think I am a special person

- Everybody likes to hear my stories
- Sometimes I tell good stories

- I usually get the respect that I deserve*
- I insist upon getting the respect that is due me

- I don't mind following orders*
- I like having authority over people
I am going to be a great person
I hope I am going to be successful

People sometimes believe what I tell them*
I can make anybody believe anything I want them to

I expect a great deal from other people
I like to do things for other people

I like to be the center of attention
I prefer to blend in with the crowd

I am much like everybody else*
I am an extraordinary person

I always know what I am doing
Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing

I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people*
I find it easy to manipulate people

Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me*
People always seem to recognize my authority

I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so
When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed

I try not to be a show off*
I am apt to show off if I get the chance

I am more capable than other people
There is a lot that I can learn from other people

Please indicate your agreement with each of the following statements.
In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for.
I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them.
When I feel that the image I am portraying isn’t working, I can readily change it to something that does.
I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.*
I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation I find myself in. Even when it might be to my advantage, I have difficulty putting up a good front.* Once I know what the situation calls for, it’s easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly.

I am often able to read people’s true emotions correctly through their eyes. In conversations, I am sensitive to even the slightest change in the facial expression of the person I’m conversing with. My powers of intuition are quite good when it comes to understanding others’ emotions and motives. I can usually tell when others consider a joke to be in bad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly. I can usually tell when I’ve said something inappropriate by reading it in the listener’s eyes. If someone is lying to me, I usually know it at once from that person’s manner of expression.

I tend to show different sides of myself to different people. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons. Although I know myself, I find that others do not know me. Different situations can make me behave like very different people. Different people tend to have different impressions about the type of person I am. I am not always the person I appear to be. I sometimes have the feeling that people don’t know who I really am.

It is my feeling that if everyone else in a group is behaving in a certain manner, this must be the proper way to behave. I actively avoid wearing clothes that are not in style. At parties I usually try to behave in a manner that makes me fit in. When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of others for cues. I try to pay attention to the reactions of others to my behavior in order to avoid being out of place. I find that I tend to pick up slang expressions from others and use them as part of my own vocabulary. I tend to pay attention to what others are wearing. The slightest look of disapproval in the eyes of a person with whom I am interacting is enough to make me change my approach. It’s important to me to fit in to the group I’m with. My behavior often depends on how I feel others wish me to behave. If I am the least bit uncertain as to how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of others for cues. I usually keep up with clothing style changes by watching what others wear.
When in a social situation, I tend not to follow the crowd, but instead behave in a manner that suits my particular mood at the time.

0 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

**Need for cognition.** (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982).
I prefer complex to simple problems.
I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.
Thinking is not my idea of fun.*
I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities.*
I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a likely chance I will have to think in depth about something.*
I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours.
I only think as hard as I have to.*
I prefer to think about small daily projects to long term ones.*
I like tasks that require little thought once I’ve learned them.*
The idea of relying on thought to make my way to the top appeals to me.
I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.
Learning new ways to think doesn’t excite me very much.*
I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles I must solve.
The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.
I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult, and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.
I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that requires a lot of mental effort.*
It’s enough for me that something gets the job done; I don’t care how or why it works.*
I usually end up deliberating about issues even when they do not affect me personally.
1 = extremely uncharacteristic of me to 5 = extremely characteristic of me

**Information control scale.** (Feaster, 2011).
For each of the following actions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree that you can perform these actions when communicating with people via the Internet.
When making mistakes during interactions, I can generally recover from them.
I feel that I can present myself well in interactions.
When things don't go the way I intend in an interaction, I feel that I am able to adapt as needed.
I can always say what I need to say in interactions.
I can generally detect changes that occur in interactions.
I feel that I am able to plan the way interactions will proceed.
Interactions often don't go the way I intend them to go.*
When I need to do so, I can execute necessary communication strategies.
I am able to communicate in ways that I feel are appropriate to the situation.
I can sense my communication partners' feelings and changes in feelings.
I often misunderstand my communication partner.*
I have the ability to regulate the flow of communication between my communication partner and myself.

I have the ability to control the pace of an interaction if I need to do so.

If an interaction gets heated or overly emotional, I can generally calm the conversation down.

I can avoid topics that I don't want to discuss.

I can easily end an interaction if I need to do so.

I can generally hide emotions from my communication partners when I need to do so.

I can ignore things about an interaction if I need to do so.

1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Eysenck personality questionnaire brief version. (Sato, 2005).

Are you a talkative person?
Are you rather lively?
Do you enjoy meeting new people?
Can you usually let yourself go and enjoy yourself at a lively party?
Do you usually take the initiative in making new friends?
Can you easily get some life into a rather dull party?
Do you tend to keep in the background on social occasions?*
Do you like mixing with people?
Do you like to plenty of action and excitement around you?
Are you mostly quiet when you are with other people?*
Do other people think of you as being very lively?
Can you get a party going?
Does you mood often go up and down?
Do you ever feel miserable for no reason?
Are you an irritable person?
Are your feelings easily hurt?
Do you often feel "fed-up"?
Would you call yourself a nervous person?
Are you a worrier?
Would you call yourself tense or “highly-strung”?
Do you worry too long after an embarrassing experience?
Do you suffer from nerves?
Do you often feel lonely?
Are you often troubled about feelings of guilt?
1 = not at all, 2 = slightly, 3 = moderately, 4 = very much, 5 = extremely

Consumers’ need for uniqueness. Short form, from Ruvio, Shoham, and Brenčič (2008).

The following statements concern your perceptions about yourself in a variety of situations. Please indicate your agreement with each statement.

I often combine possessions in such a way that I create a personal image that cannot be duplicated.
I often try to find a more interesting version of run-of-the-mill products because I enjoy being original.
I actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special products or brands.
Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image.

When it comes to the products I buy and the situations in which I use them, I have broken customs and rules.
I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own.
I have often gone against the understood rules of my social group regarding when and how certain products are properly used.
I enjoy challenging the prevailing taste of people I know by buying something they would not seem to accept.

When a product I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin to use it less.
I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.
As a rule, I dislike products or brands that are customarily bought by everyone.
The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.
1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Media use.
On an average day, how much time do you spend watching television?
On an average day, how much time do you spend watching movies?
On an average day, how much time do you spend listening to radio or music?
On an average day, how much time do you spend reading print media (e.g., newspapers, magazines, and books)?
On an average day, how much time do you spend with the Internet?
On an average day, how much time do you spend on social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, or Google Plus?
On an average day, how much time do you spend with instant messaging or chat programs?
On an average day, how much time do you spend with discussion forums on the Internet?
On an average day, how much time do you spend with video websites like YouTube or Vimeo?
0 = none at all, 1 = less than 30 minutes, 2 = 30 to 60 minutes, 3 = 1 to 2 hours, 4 = 2 to 3 hours, 5 = 3 to 4 hours, 6 = 4 to 5 hours, 7 = more than 5 hours

How often do you post, share, or discuss movies, movie clips, or trailers on social media?
How often do you post, share, or discuss music or music videos on social media?
How often do you post, share, or discuss websites and other hyperlinks on social media?
How often do you post, share, or discuss photos and other images on social media?
6 = several times a day, 5 = about once a day, 4 = 3 to 5 days a week, 3 = 1 to 2 days a week 2 = every few weeks, 1 = less often, 0 = never

How often do you watch films, either at the cinema, home, or elsewhere?  
6 = several times a day, 5 = about once a day, 4 = 3 to 5 days a week, 3 = 1 to 2 days a week 2 = every few weeks, 1 = less often, 0 = never

**Attitudes toward documentaries, with distractor genres.**

Generally, how do you feel about action films?  
Generally, how do you feel about comedy films?  
Generally, how do you feel about documentary films?  
Generally, how do you feel about television sitcoms?  
Generally, how do you feel about television documentaries?  
Generally, how do you feel about reality television?  
Generally, how do you feel about Facebook?  
Generally, how do you feel about Twitter?  
Generally, how do you feel about YouTube?  
Generally, how do you feel about reading blogs?  
1 = very negative to 7 = very positive

**Ten-item personality inventory.** (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2001).  
Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate your agreement with each statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.  
I see myself as:  
Extraverted, enthusiastic.  
Critical, quarrelsome.  
Dependable, self-disciplined.  
Anxious, easily upset.  
Open to new experiences, complex.  
Reserved, quiet.  
Sympathetic, warm.  
Disorganized, careless.  
Calm, emotionally stable.  
Conventional, uncreative.  
1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree moderately, 3 = disagree a little 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = agree a little, 6 = agree moderately, 7 = agree strongly

**Demographics.**

What is your sex?  
Male   Female

What is your age?

159
Please indicate your ethnicity
Asian
Black/African-American
Hispanic/Latino
Native American
Pacific Islander
Non-Hispanic White/Caucasian
Multiracial
Other

What is your major?

Are you participating in this study for required course credit or extra credit?

*indicates reversed item
Appendix H: Measures for Session 2

Sharing intentions.
We would like for you to share a single video clip with the discussion group in the main study. Which clip would you like to share?
Airstream Living; Living on Ice; Long Live the Kings; The Knife Maker; Ray: A Life Underwater; Share the Pie

Favorite video.
Which video clip was your favorite?
Airstream Living; Living on Ice; Long Live the Kings; The Knife Maker; Ray: A Life Underwater; Share the Pie

Consider the video content you just viewed and your overall enjoyment of the video viewing session. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements.
I enjoyed this video content very much.
Watching the video content was fun.
I would describe this video content as very interesting.
While watching the video content, I was thinking about how much I enjoyed it.
This video content did not hold my attention.*
1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree

Attitudes toward videos.
Specifically, how do you feel about the documentary film clip <TITLE>?
1 = very negative to 7 = very positive

Motivation to comply. Adapted from Ajzen and Fishbein (1980).
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) your friends think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) your classmates think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) your social networking site friends think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) people you interact with online think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) **people in the main study’s discussion group** think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) **other Ohio State students** think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) **students at other universities** think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) **professional critics** think you should consume?
How much do you care about what media (e.g., movies, television, music, books) **trendsetters** think you should consume?
1 = not at all to 7 = very much

**Attitude toward the impression management situation.** Adapted from Kwon and Chon (2009) and Fishbein and Ajzen (2011).
The opportunity to enhance my self-image within the discussion group is:
The opportunity to display a status symbol within the discussion group is:
The opportunity to relate to the other group members is:
The opportunity to express myself to the discussion group is:
1 = very negative to 7 = very positive

**Manipulation checks.**
*Perceived publicness.* Items adapted from Gonzales and Hancock (2008) and Bateman, Pike, and Butler (2011).
The discussion group will see which video content I chose.
The video site will indicate to others which video content I viewed.
Any discussion group member could recognize which video content I selected.
The setup of the online site allows the group to see which video content I select.
1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree

*Impression motivation.* Adapted from Kwon and Chon (2009).
What video content I view can enhance my self-image within the discussion group.
Watching particular video content can be a status symbol within the discussion group.
Watching video content can help me relate to the other group members.
Watching video content can help me express myself to the discussion group.
1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree

*Perceived popularity.*
A video with this rating would be very popular.
1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree

*Perceived prestige.*
A video with this rating would be very prestigious.
1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree
*indicates reversed item