GENDERED MEDIA ENGAGINGS AS USER AGENCY MEDIATIONS WITH SOCIOCULTURAL
AND MEDIA STRUCTURES: A SENSE-MAKING METHODOLOGY STUDY OF THE
SITUATIONALITY OF GENDER DIVERGENCES AND CONVERGENCES.

DISSERTATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

Across many approaches to media studies, little has been done to understand how the various aspects of men and women's involvement with media products coalesce. Gender is typically assigned to an individual as determined by sexual characteristics or as some rating of socioculturally defined femininity or masculinity as determined by a psychological scale. Gender is then taken to explain why people engage with the media they do, how often, with what type, and to what effect. A narrow focus on gender differences perpetuates a conceptualization of people as always man or woman. Gender is assumed to be a stable trait of a person for predicting such engaging with the media across time and space, and expectations are that someone identified as man or woman would unfailingly act as masculine or feminine, to the potential detriment of the individual who does not.

The problem of focusing on gender differences is related to the problem of how people's engaging with the media has been studied. The process of engaging with a media product is complex, with a variety of material, aka structural, and interpretive, aka agentic, factors interacting that must be studied to understand the process. Often times a single study will focus on one particular aspect of this process, assuming the nature of the others, and in these assumptions gender stereotypes can take root. These stereotypes then reinforce public discourse as to what either gender does with the media surrounding them, reinscribing the creation of certain media products for either gender.

These dual problems indicate a need for comprehensive studies to explore the whats, hows and whys of men's and women's engaging with media products that were either meant for them or for the other gender. The purpose of this study was to understand individuals' experiences with gendered media that was meant for theirs

and the other gender. Using the dialogic interpretive/performative model of the gendering process as the framework for constructing this research, this study sought to uncover gender commonalities and differences in the gendered media engaging processes of selectings, interpretings, utilizings, and the conditions in which either manifests. Instead of conceptualizing gender as a stable trait, gender was treated as a fluid interpretive state of mind, performed in response to the structural features of situations such as engaging with gendered media products.

A series of interviews, using Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology, were conducted with men and women to explore their experiences with these gendered media. By combining Sense-Making Methodology's Life-Line and Micro-Element interviewing protocols, men and women recalled four types of experiences with gendered media: media meant for men versus media meant for women; and media used only once versus media used repeatedly. Analysis focused on their selectings, interpretings, and utilizings of these media products, both within specific sense-making instances and across these instances and the four recalled situations.

By analyzing gendered media engagings on the level of specific interpretive and performative acts within a situation, more convergence than divergence was noted in how and why men and women engage with gendered media products. Overall, the results of the convergings and divergings across qualitative and quantitative analyses demonstrate a mixture of meeting stereotypical expectations and of resulting from interactions between personal preferences and situational characteristics. For either, how gender is seen and activated as an interpretive stance appears to mediate or moderate which factor is more related to the gendered media engaging during specific aspects of the process.

DEDICATION

To my family, friends and mentors…

You are the Elixir for a thirsty Mind.
You are the Balm for a stressed Heart.
You are the Zephyr for a weary Soul.

Shine on, Live long, Prosper always.
For as long as the Truth is out there,
May your Force never cease
To press me towards that possible Dream.

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FIELDS OF STUDY

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   Area of Emphasis: Media Reception Studies

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

> "Sex is a nominal variable. This means that although
> two different units of analysis may vary in terms
> of their sex, this variation implies to rank ordering.
> A man is worth no more than a woman is."
> --Andy Ruddock, <u>Understanding Audiences</u>

A search in the Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities subset of Google Scholar with just two words, "gender" and "media", results in roughly 864,000 articles, books, essays and so forth. As this sizeable corpus of scholarly work indicates, gender is used quite commonly as a variable or phenomenon of interest in media studies. Numerous media effects, uses, and reception studies have focused on understanding men and women as they engage with media products, from technologies like computers and television sets to content like films and advertisements. Research has sought to understand how often men and women use these media, what was their reason for using the media, what they thought about these media, and how these media impacted their lives.

Across three fields of inquiry into the whats, whys and hows that people engage with media in their everyday lives, such questions are often addressed separately. In humanities film studies, studies focus on differences in how media is encoded with messages to create/promote/allow either a masculine or feminine interpretation or spectatorship. In media uses and effects, studies focus on differences in why men and women use the media they do, and in how the media impacts them. In critical/cultural reception, studies focus on differences in how media is interpreted and enmeshed in people's lives, with more focus on women due

to feminist concerns. Across these various studies, little has been done to understand how the various aspects of men and women's involvement with these media products individually and holistically coalesce. The deficit indicates a need for comprehensive studies to be conducted that will explore the whats, hows and whys of men's and women's engaging with media products that were either meant for them or for the other gender.

Understanding coalescences as well as divergences is required as a continual focus on gender differences is worrisome. A narrow focus perpetuates a simplistic conceptualization of people as always man or woman, as determined by biological, religious, psychoanalytical, societal, and/or cultural definitions. This is particularly important in media studies as the media, both traditional and "new", are criticized as being institutions of socialization, providing information for individuals to "learn" how to behave. Studying and reporting only differences in how men and women engage with the media can undermine attempts to equalize gender representations in that media. If your audience believes they should only be watching specific types of representations, then from a market perspective attempts to equalize representations will fail. If men and women will only engage with stereotypical male and female representations, then there is less economic incentive to produce counter-stereotypical representations. Why produce for consumers who will not consume?

The problem of focusing on gender differences is related to the problem of how people's engaging with the media has been studied. The process of engaging with a media product is complex, with a variety of material, aka structural, and interpretive, aka agentic, factors interacting that must be studied to understand the process, and definitely before attempting something as complicated, but as desired, as predicting when an engaging will take place, where, with what, how often, and to what effect. To understand this process, the encoding or creation of the media product must be as investigated as the decoding, the selection and interpretation, and the recoding, the impact and incorporation into life. Often times a single study will focus on one particular aspect of this process, assuming the nature of the others, and in these assumptions gender stereotypes can take root.

The study reported here is an attempt at remedying these problems. The approach taken is not the only possible route towards solution, nor does it cover all aspects of an individual's engaging with a media product. Instead, this study focused on the interpretive process of engaging with a media product, and the extent to which gender is integrated into this process as a material condition and an interpretive process. This study argues that gender should be studied as the manifestation of an individual's behavior, from desires and thoughts to observable deeds, which result from interacting with the environment in which he or she lives. This study also argues that investigating a specific engaging with a media product is the best method for illuminating these various factors as existing in the individual media user's interpretive stance. Also, by studying situationally, the specific cognitive and affective sense-making acts of an engaging process can be used to compare men and women. Studying specific sense-making instances helps to determine if the oft-reported gender differences manifest during all aspects of an engaging with a media product, if they exist only in an aggregate, or under certain conditions requiring the individual's interpretation. This is a study that explores a person's interpretive stance to simultaneously study encoding, decoding and recoding of media products. This is a study of an individual's agency as reaction to how the manifestations of sociocultural, media and situational structures are interpreted, and using this approach to investigate gender as a variable and phenomenon of interest in media studies.

Media engagings with the sociocultural environment

The sociocultural environment around us has been bifurcated into "for him" and "for her" since before the arrival of what is considered the mass media. This bifurcation is based on assumptions of what is appropriate behavior for either gender, with rules on how men and women are expected to behave, think, and feel given a particular situation. In order to be a "gentleman", a man was expected to be decisive, chivalrous and considerate of others, especially women. In order to be a "lady", a woman was expected to be demure, polite, and nurturing of others,

especially men. Such assumptions and expectations were structured into numerous aspects of a sociocultural environment's landscape.

Before moving on, I should pause to explain the use of the term "sociocultural environment" in this study[1]. While societies and cultures are very distinct concepts and structures, they share common features in how they interact with the individuals who are their members (Hall, 1977). Both are large structures with material aspects that are external to the individual, and both promulgate information or norms that the individual internalizes and utilizes to navigate his or her daily life. As these two aspects are fundamental to the arguments and purpose of this study, society and culture are being discussed as a unified structure against and with which the individual interacts.

The reason the entire term is called "environment" is due to the pervasiveness of sociocultural influences in the lives of its members. From an ecological standpoint, an environment is a complex network of factors, which includes (among other things) individual life forms, geological entities, and the fluid dynamics of climatology. On a conceptual level, a human's membership with a society or culture is the same construct. A sociocultural environment is a complex network of norms, belief systems, institutions, rituals and stories. One cannot remove a life form from an environment and expect either the life form or the environment to remain unchanged. The same relationship applies to a human and his or her society or culture (Watsuji, 1937/1971).

As the media industry is part of the landscape for a sociocultural environment, the assumptions and expectations for men and women are transferred to media products. In many patriarchal sociocultural environments, anything competition-oriented is meant for men (action movies, video games, sports), while anything relationship-oriented is meant for women (romance novels, soap operas, "chick flicks"). A media product may be created with the intention of being consumed more regularly by one gender more than the other in order to encourage

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[1] The term "sociocultural environment" has been used by various authors to refer to the social and cultural context in which human behavior occurs. A search on Google Scholar, the subset of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities resulted in 3780 items. For examples pertinent to this study, see Dressman, 1991; Paquette & Raine, 2004.

sales by that market. Or, a media product may come to be identified as being better suited for one gender than the other. In either case, such media products can be seen, accepted and thus labeled as *gendered media*.

Through the course of their daily lives, men and women engage with media meant for their gender, as well as with media meant for the other gender. What media products people engage with, how and why they do so, are impacted by the conditions of the sociocultural environment in which they live and how they interpret these conditions (McQuail, 1994). Gendered media contains features that society and media producers feel are more suitable for one gender versus the other; thus, each gender may feel most comfortable engaging with the media meant for them (Morley, 1994). These gendered media products range from technologies (e.g., computers and digital gaming devices) to genres (e.g., sports versus romance) to specific texts (e.g., *All My Children* and *Pretty Woman*) (Lull, 1990). Same-gender media engagings occur when the engaging is with the media product seen as meant for one's own gender. Cross-gender media engaging occurs when men engage with media meant for women and women engage with media meant for men.

The term *media engaging* is being used here instead of "media use" due to the varying applications of the term "use" in describing the activities that constitute a person's encounter with a media product. The term "use" has been applied both as a measurement of exposure and a description of the reason for the encounter. As a measurement, *use* is a quantitative variable, implying an interest in how frequently and what type of media encounter a person has. As a description, *use* is a qualitative variable, applied to understand what purpose the person has for the encounter. Naturally, these two conceptualizations overlap, with the reasons a person has for the encounter related to the frequency of exposure to that media product.

However, *use* excludes other aspects of a media encounter that are potentially relevant in understanding the relationship between reasons for and frequency of use. In both the qualitative and quantitative use of the term, *use* refers to the *selecting* or the *utilizing* of the media product, although more focus has been on the reasons for and frequency of selectings. What is excluded is the *interpreting*

of the media product by the individual[2]. And yet the way in which the media product is interpretively received can stand as a mediator or moderator between the selecting and utilizing. To reintegrate this aspect of an encounter, I have decided to use the term "media engaging" instead of "media use" to discuss the processes that constitute an encounter with a media product.

The other purpose in using the term *media engaging* is to emphasize how any encounter with a media product is a series of actions that include internal and external behaviors (from thinking, feeling, to acting) and occur within certain time- and space-based contexts, or situations. Researching a media engaging requires understanding a number of different factors that are holistically tallied to determine the nature of the media engaging. These factors include the features of the media product, the individual's personal preferences and interpretive stance, the sociocultural environment, and the situation of the encounter. Any of these factors may cue or constrain the selecting, interpreting, and utilizing of the media product.

Thus, what is being studied here is an individual's interpretive process of engaging with a media product that in some way reflects upon the sociocultural environment in which both the media industry and the individual are ensconced. The variety and abundance of media available to any single individual will vary on a number of factors from person to person, but that media constitutes the individual's media environment, which serves to provide the individual with chances to engage with various media products. Some of these media products will be seen as gendered due to the overlapping of the individual's media environment with the individual's sociocultural environment. The individual's sociocultural environment provides information as to what media products are deemed most appropriate for which gender. Likewise, since the media industry[3] is enmeshed in the same or at least similar sociocultural environment, the industry will create media products to reflect what are believed to be the desires of either gender based on sociocultural

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[2] Levy and Windahl (1984, 1985), in discussing audience activity, did develop a typology with both a temporal dimension and an orientation dimension. The orientation dimension included the individual's selection, involvement and utilization of a media product. These terms correlate to my choice of terms, respectively, selectings, interpretings, and utilizings

[3] The media industry in this study is either directly the Hollywood capitalist model or was inspired by it, such as products that are Japanese animation (anime) and graphic novel (manga).

stereotypes. In this way, an individual is faced with a two-prong structure: his or her sociocultural environment provides information about gender stereotypes that are to some degree replicated and reinforced by the media products in his or her media environment.

The expectation then, which is often discussed and reproduced in academic research, is that men and women will differ in their media engagings in ways that align with gender stereotypes. The purpose of this study is to explore an individual's engaging with these gendered media products to determine if this expected gender difference is maintained when it is examined from the individual's interpretive stance and is focused on the situated and sense-making instance aspects of the engaging process.

Theoretical constructions of gender

In order to properly begin a discussion on the theoretical approach being employed in this study, it is necessary to define what is meant by the gendering process. The concept of *gender* is much contested as various definitions and related concepts overlap, to the point of confusion with the term of *sex* and its utilization to differentiate people (Deaux, 1985; Hawkesworth, 1997; Laner, 2000). The common use of the term "sex" is to refer to the individual's observable biological nature as being male or female as determined by sexual characteristics, both directly related to reproduction and indirectly conveyed as physical features (Deaux, 1985). Alternatively, *gender* is referred to as the psychological characteristics that are seen as masculine or feminine (Deaux, 1985), or as the sociocultural information that shapes these psychological, and ultimately identity, traits (Hawkesworth, 1997; Laner, 2000).

This discussion of sex versus gender involves differentiating structural versus agentic approaches to understanding differences between people. It is argued below that there are three primary ways in which differences between men and women are explained: two are primarily structural, while the third makes allowances for agency. Before this argument can be developed, how the terms being used here must be clarified. As Antony Giddens' structuration theory is closest to my own

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beliefs about the relationship between structure and agency, I defer to his work for my definitions (1976/1993; 1979/2002; 1984). The definition of structure used here is an overarching system that is external to the individual, although features of the structure, such as norms and ideologies, may be internalized by the individual, and not under the immediate volition of the individual. The definition of agency used here is a human's ability to choose to engage in some activity, be it internal (thoughts, feelings, decisions) or external (observable behavior).

Across a variety of academic fields, theories construct this relationship as one where a society or culture structures the agents' internal and external behaviors because the structure transmits information on what are acceptable behaviors. The structure molds the "perfect" individual, whose agency is an illusion, just as the dance of the marionette appears lifelike due to the disappearance of the puppet master into the shadows. These conceptualizations have been discussed by such theorists as Karl Marx, Claude Levi-Strauss, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, and Michel Foucault – all seeing the power of structure in varying ways over the individual (Althusser, 1971; Foucault, 1978; Hall, 1977; Hebdige, 1979; Ryan & Wentworth, 1999; Storey, 1993). Other theorists see individuals having power, again to varying degrees, over how they are subjugated, interpolated, or subjectified by the structure. These theorists include George H. Mead, Herbert Blumer, Pierre Bourdieu, Antony Giddens, Watsuji Tetsuro, and Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (Bourdieu, 1980/2002; Blumer, 1969; Giddens, 1976/1993; 1979/2002; 1984; Giddens & Pierson, 1998; Lane, 2000; Thompson, 1989, Watsuji, 1937/1971). Common to all these theorists is the recognition of some relationship that produces and reproduces the sociocultural environment, the individuals within that environment, and the collective action by individuals that may change that environment.

Those who study gender have discussed it in regards to all of these relationships (Fowler, 1997; Smith, 2001). As Deaux indicated, "…underlying the debate on the use of sex versus gender…are assumptions about the determinants of differences between men and women, whereby sex often implies biological causes while gender invokes explanations based on socialization." (p. 51, 1985).

Depending on the scholar's academic field, he or she may invoke one term to label people as a way to explain what differentiates them. Someone seeking *biological constructions* as the reason is referring to *sex differences.* Someone seeking *sociocultural constructions* as the reason is referring to *gender differences.*

However, there is a third approach that connects these previous two by adding a perspective less utilized. According to Deaux (1985), the common application of sex or gender is via the observer's imposition. That is, the researcher categorizes the study's participants, either by direct observation of physical features or by the results of some measurement scale, such as Bem's Sex Role Inventory. Less common is to study men and women's interpretations of their sense of self as being gendered. The third approach involves someone seeking *interpretive/performative acts* as the reason for *gendered differences*. This third approach is argued as the nexus for all three and serves as the foundation for this study.

Biological constructions. The foundation for arguments about why men and women are different can be reduced to biological sex differences. Even in the face of other reasons for why differences exist and persist, it cannot be ignored that there are indeed differences between the male and female sexes of the human species. The question becomes not do they exist, but do they exist to a strong enough degree so as to determine differences between people on other aspects that cannot be easily reducible to sex differences?

The nature structural argument focuses on hormonal differences that exist between men and women due to their different sexual reproductive systems (DeFrancisco & Palczewski, 2007). The existence of such a difference is a biological fact and cannot be disputed as existing in the species. However, those who adhere to the nature structure to determine gender differences argue variations in hormones will impact neurological chemistry, thereby impacting the structure of the brain. Differences in how the brain operates determines how the person thinks, feels and behaves, producing general tendencies that can be described as "masculine" for appearing in men and "feminine" for appearing in women. Gender differences between men and women become naturalized, determined by the

genetics of X and Y chromosomes before any outside societal and cultural information could occur.

The genetic aspect of the argument is further developed with the addition of evolutionary theory. Here gender differences are said to have been reinforced by early human behavior, preexisting civilization with its societal and cultural influences. Men were the hunters, competition-oriented and polygamous, while women were the child bearers, relationship-oriented and monogamous. This gender difference was built on the sexual reproductive difference, which led to specific behaviors that were then reinscribed into what males do to be men and females to do be women. Evolutionary psychology often harkens back to this pre-civilized state of humanity in their attempts to describe current gender differences (Condit, 2004).

Men and women thus are doubly inscribed by the nature structure: genetics leads to hormonal differences which impact personality, and sexual reproductive differences concretized the relationship between male and female during the predawn of humanity. The agency of the individual may be able in modern times to impact this structure, as in sex change operations, but for the most part its predetermined argument remains intact as immutable. However, the nature structure can also be seen as the foundation for the nurture structure, for how societies and cultures determine and recreate gender differences.

Sociocultural constructions. Whereas the biological constructions of gender differences constitute the nature structure, sociocultural constructions constitute the nurture structure. Under this structure, the arguments for where gender comes from are reducible to gender having to be learned by the immersion into and instruction by a sociocultural environment. In order to become a gendered individual, the male or female human being is socialized by a sociocultural environment to identify with masculine or feminine internal and external behaviors.

While the nurture argument can be seen as separate and opposing to the nature argument, the two in fact reinforce each other, as the classic nurturing information was based on naturalized sex differences. The factual sex differences of the nature structure become the symbolic gender differences of nurture structure. Indeed, it was the goal of feminism to deconstruct gender as naturalized due to

biology by showing cultural variation in what gender was and where the differences lie (Andersen, 2003; DeFrancisco & Palczewski, 2007; Hawkesworth, 1997; van Zoonen, 1991; Wood, 1994). However, if we trace back the genealogy of the discourse around gender, we can find these biological differences were used as a foundation upon which sociocultural, or symbolic, differences between males and females have been built (Foucault, 1978; Seidman, 2003). Thus, biological sex differences are transmitted via the sociocultural symbolic differences.

Symbolic differences found in sociocultural norms define the boundaries of each gender; that is, the information encapsulated in these norms structure what each gender should feel, think and do in their everyday lives in order to be treated as a proper member of that sociocultural environment (DeFrancisco & Palczewski, 2007). Members are taught the proper behavior, internal and external, to match their biological sex -- information that an individual must know to function as a successful member of that environment. Individuals are expected to be willing and able recipients of this information; males and females would want to receive this guidance from the sociocultural environment in order to successfully, i.e. without extreme prejudice and/or harm, exist within it.

Hence a transmission model of communication is the most common conceptualization for how gendering occurs, and is depicted in Figure 1.1 below. The symbolic differences are the messages transmitted to the members of that sociocultural environment through communication pathways that include more channels than just interpersonal and mediated; they can also be other socializing institutions, such as religion and schools (Mastronardi, 2003; Kelly & Donohew, 1999). Normative information can be reinforced from a variety of sources and may be in the form of entertainment, such as stories, songs, and art. In industrial and post-industrial societies, where the mass media permeate the sociocultural environment, the individual is inundated daily with this gendering information. Increasingly, if not already, mass media are the primary channel through which symbolic differences are woven into people's everyday lives and sense of selves.
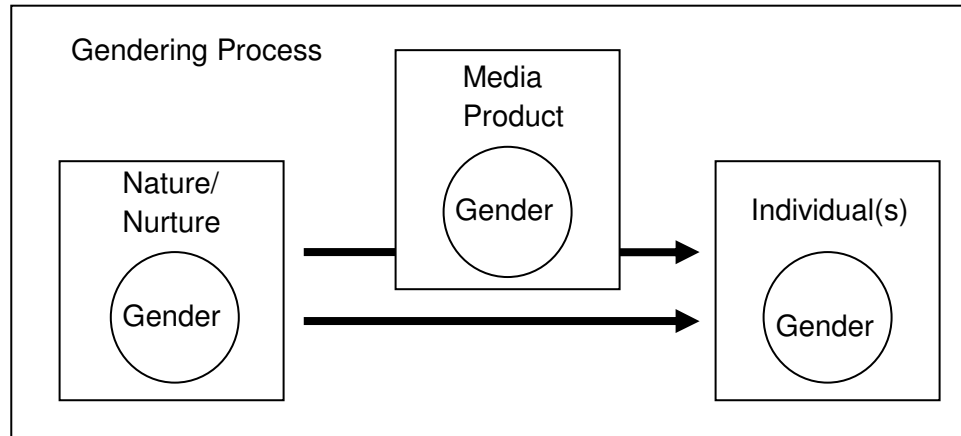
Figure 1.1. Transmission Model of Gendering Process

Interpretive/performative acts. The nature/nurture structure is predicated on the belief that individuals will accept the packaged information about gender without resistance because it is in the individual's "best interests" if that individual desires safe integration into the corresponding society and/or culture. However, such an approach to understanding the creation of a sense of self as gendered, or gender identity, and thus the maintenance of sexual/gender differences, has two interrelated problems. First, the approach presumes the individual has no agency in its dealing with the nature/nurture structure, and thus is passive toward any subjugation, interpolation, and subjectification process (Butler, 1997; McNay, 2005). Second, feminists advocating this approach have replaced the naturalization of sex with the universalism of gender as the determining factor in human activity (Butler, 1988; Hawkesworth, 1997). To address these problems, the third and most recent approach to understanding gender as a process restores the individual's agency and recognizes situationality in the matter of developing a sense of gender.

Instead of seeing the construction of a sense of gender, and thus gender differences, as an act of being open to transmitted information, the interpretive/performative construction operates from a dialogic model, as depicted in Figure 1.2 below. The individual is in constant negotiation with the information being provided by the nature/nurture structure, and this negotiation manifests itself in how the person thinks, feels and acts as a gendered individual within situations deemed requiring such actions. Reflecting on the structure's information is the *interpretive*

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act, while manifesting some internal or external behavior based on this reflection is the *performative act*. In this way, gender moves from being a noun that encompasses stable traits to being a verb that reflects a fluctuating, responsive process (Hawkesworth, 1997); instead of gender being constructed solely by the structure, it is deconstructed and reconstructed by the individual (Poggio, 2006).

The individual's capacity and requirement to engage in this negotiation has been discussed from such theoretical perspectives as symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969) and performance theory (Butler, 1988). Uniting these different theories is the basic belief of gender as an interpretive frame, or script, or schema, only known to observers in how the person discusses their views and actions, and the observation of such actions. An interpretive frame contains, maintains and informs how the self meets with conditions of life as experienced at that moment; the frame can draw upon a repertoire of experiences with previous moments and the knowledge of and reaction to the nature/nurture structure.

For any situation in which the individual interprets the need to act in a gendered way, that determination is the result of the negotiation of this repertoire with the interpretation of the nature of the situation, which includes manifestations of the sociocultural environment, such as gender stereotyped norms (Blumer, 1969). In some situations, this process may result in interpreting/performing gender in accordance to the nature/nurture constructions, but it is just as likely to be against, negotiated, or any position across that range (Ruddock, 2001). Knowing how gender will manifest within a person, and thus across people, is dependent upon the individual's interpretation of the situation as "what works best for me", and not what the structure deems is best.

Because of the central focus of negotiation, the dialogic model of communication is applicable. Using this model means gendering does not happen solely through the force of the society or culture, nor does it arise fundamentally from the actions of a lone individual. Gender arises from the confluence of the structure and the individuals who reside with it, where the exchange of information between these various factors results in something more than the sum of its parts.
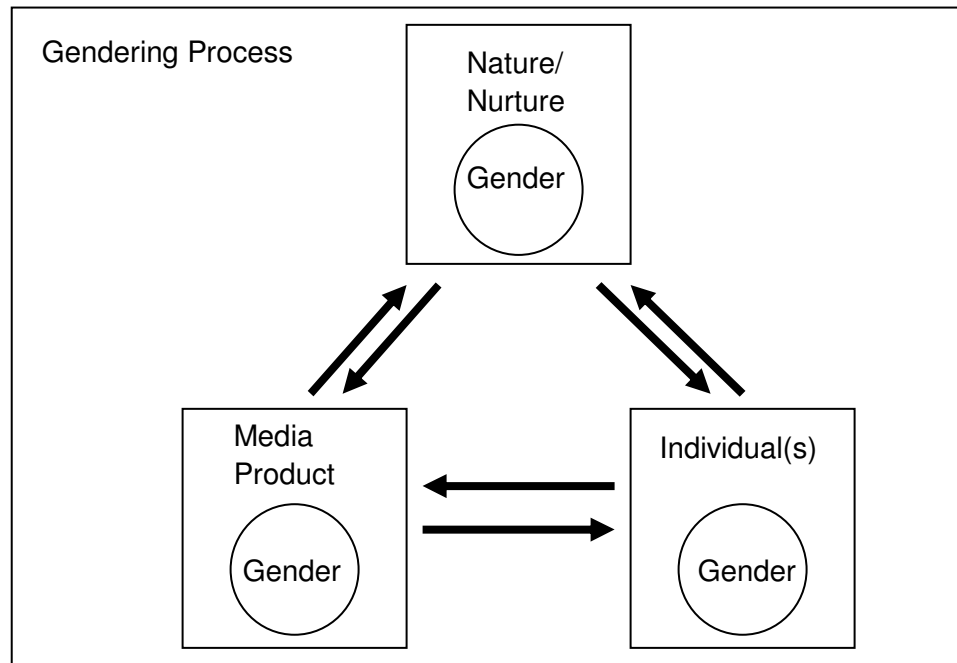
Figure 1.2. Dialogic Model of Gendering Process.

Gender differences, as stereotyped by the nature/nurture structure, are

maintained by the interpreting/performing of individuals in accordance with the

structure's categorization. While there are pre-existing definitions as to what

constitutes gender, it is only through the actions of individuals that these definitions

are maintained (Blumer, 1969; Butler, 1988; Wood, 1994). Indeed, these definitions

cannot be escaped as they are always present, always the information that the

individual must contend with in making his or her own determination for a sense of

gender. But the individual's power lies in his or her ability to reflect upon the

situation and what is required in it to successfully negotiate, survive, handle, move

through it (Dervin, 2003a; Weigert & Gecas, 2005). If the individual deems the

structure's categorization and expectation is not sufficient, then the individual may

act in degree counter to the structure. If enough actors interpretively and

performatively respond in this manner, then the structure must change to maintain

unity and its hegemonic influence.

Gender in this study. With the three major approaches to studying and understanding gender sketched, I want to clarify how the concept of gender is defined for use in this study. *Gender* is a category created from biological sex differences into sociocultural norms that are replicated through interpretive and performative acts, creating a naturalized, ideological, hegemonic construct that may or may not be replicated through individual agency. In this study, the *gendering process* refers to the means by which an individual comes to see him or herself as having gender, in relation to how gender is constructed by the sociocultural environment. Thus, the gendering process concerns how gender is defined, how it is assigned to specific individuals, and how those individuals come to accept and/or resist this assignment. A *sense of self as gendered*, alternatively known as gender role or gender identity, is the sense the individual has of being in some quality and quantity in concert with the ideological construct of gender. The *gendered interpretive stance* is the interpretive framework built of information about the construct of gender that influences the individual's interpretive/performative acts as interacting with the parameters of a situation.

As this study focused on the individual's interpretive stance, it is also important to point out how gender stereotypes operate. Stereotypes are reductions of complicated groups to simplified definitions to explain differences that are then integrated into a person's interpretive frame as part of the repertoire to be called upon in times of need (Deaux, 1985; Fisk & Taylor, 1991). Gender is a stereotype, used within the sociocultural environment to divide people into categories, and used by people to understand others in times when predictions need to be made quickly. Stereotypes in a gendered interpretive stance, as the exclusive, primary information source, would be revealed if resulting performings are in concert with the expectations of the nature/nurture structure within a situation in which gender is present.

In other words, for this study, a person is interpreting/performing in concert with the nature/nurture structure if any interpretive/performative act, or sense-making instance, occurring in a gendered media engaging situation can be explained by a pre-existing gender stereotype. Those divergings between individuals that are

stereotypical may be indication of person interpreting gender, the gendering process, and/or gendered self in concert with what is constructed by nature/nurture. Convergings between individuals are expected to be counter-stereotypical, traceable to some other aspect of the individual's sense of self and life situation. Those divergings that are not stereotypical would be presumed to be either evidence of breaking down stereotypes or the individual negotiating with something other than gender for that aspect of the engaging process.

Why studying gendered media engagings matters

Thanks to the work of scholars such as Dallas Smythe, we are aware of the central role of advertisement in most media industries (Smythe, 1995). Television, radio, newspapers, internet, magazines, comic books, and even to an extent digital games and films, are reliant on the revenue generated by consumers using media products to spread advertisements. The industry does not receive this revenue if they cannot guarantee to the advertisers that there will be someone consuming the media product with that particular advertisement.

In order to make this guarantee, the media industry needs to generate an audience for that media product. Audiences are conceived as a mass of people that need to be addressed and organized (McQuail, 1997). The industry then sells that "audience commodity" to the advertisers. In order to generate the audience, the industry needs to have control over how a complex mass of potential individuals can be divided up and packaged so as to be attractive to advertisers.

In order to create these audiences, media producers create media products they feel will confidently attract a specific type of people they can sell to advertisers most interested in that type of consumer (Turow, 1997). The more precisely you can target a person with a product that the person sees as relevant or best-fit, then the more likely that person will consume/engage with that product. One of the most common ways of segmenting people into potential audiences and consumers is along the gender line.

Using the concept of what women and men are expected to prefer, based on sociocultural definitions of masculinity and femininity, media producers create media

products with these features. The traditional construct is that men will identify more readily with masculine features, and vice versa for women.[4] Femininity is constructed around emotionality, nurturance and community, while masculinity is constructed around rationality, ruthlessness and individuality (van Zoonen, 1991). Based on these polarized characterizations, feminine features include romantic interests, comedy, fashion, musical numbers, and handsome men, while masculine features include competition, science and technology, violence, politics, and sexy women (Austin, 1999; Bhatia & Desmond, 1993; Calvert, Kondla, Ertel & Meisel, 2001; Cherry, 1999; Jacobson, 2005; Kuhn, 2002; Nyberg, 1995). The individual who agrees with the construction of gender as directed to their biological sex -- that is, the gendered individual -- is expected to desire the media products meant for his or her gender and to accept such gendered media without question. In this way the symbolic differences are transmitted through the mass media and into the everyday lives of the people of that sociocultural environment.

However, shifting to a dialogic approach, individuals, en masse, have the ability to restructure the structure. Any new interpretive/performative act by individuals, whether material or ideological, could result in the institutionalization of a new common knowledge. Such institutionalization is even more likely if enough individuals amass around this new act, thereby forming an alternative society or subculture to challenge the predominant structure (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Hebdige, 1979). A new form of fashion, new sense of humor, new sensibility for sex, all could be the result of the acceptance of a new, alternative mode of interpretive/performing. While the actual numbers of individuals necessary to generate such a restructuring is an empirical question, theoretically once this critical mass is reached, hegemony enters. Because hegemony is a "moving equilibrium" (Hebdige, 1979), should the dominant structure wish to remain as such, it must shift to accommodate the shift in individuals. From a dialogic perspective, this give-and-

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[4] While the traditional assumption as been for same sex or gender identification, with research to find this tendency, there is likewise more recent evidence that shows other factors about the representation of people can be paramount in terms of predicting identification (Reinhard, 2005a; 2005b). Because the traditional assumptions are so ingrained that most media industry products operate from them. However, there are examples showing changes, products that encourage cross-gender media engagings.

take between agents producing and structures institutionalizing may take generations or even centuries. Or it could only take years in a media-centric, post-industrial society such as the modern United States.

Consider, as a theoretical thought experiment, the increase in media fragmentation (Napoli, 2003). The structure, here the capitalist media industry, began to introduce new texts, channels and technology that increased the range of potential media engagings. However, because the amount of total time available to spend with the media cannot likewise increase for the majority of people, that means the media user has to make more active choices in what media would be used when and where (Livingstone, 1999; 2003; 2004). To the industry's viewpoint, this means their potential audience was fragmenting. By giving people more things to choose from, the industry had simultaneously reduced the number of people who were likely to be consuming one specific product at any given time.

The structure modified the agency, but then the agency modified the structure as the industry adjusted to this fragmentation by targeting their products to specific types of people, as well as changing the features of media products to encourage active engaging. The more the industry offered, the more the media user became active, and the more the industry saw them as fragmented and thus became determined to address them as such, thereby reinforcing them as being active and fragmented. Similar examples of this dialogic model can be found in analyzing: the relationship between shonen manga (Japanese comics for men) and the marketplace (Shiokawa, 1999); the relationship between media producers and the Internet (Roscoe, 1999; Siapera, 2004), which includes changing how media producers engage with media consumers (Napoli, 2008; Reinhard, 2008).

Just as the dialogic model could predict the reifying of traditional gendered boundaries, it could also predict changes in these definitions (Jacobson, 2005). Operating within symbolic boundaries on what is gender, moving between accepting and resisting these boundaries, the individual engages with media that may be more or less gendered, and more or less meant for their gender. Individuals who more routinely engage with media meant for their gender may unknowingly reify this gendering process -- their repeat media engagings and participation in the targeted

audience reinforce both the media producers' felt pressure to create such targeted media, and how the sociocultural environment defines what each gender supposedly prefers, based upon the actions of actual gendered individuals. Thus through the actions of individuals, media producers, societies and cultures can be affected, thereby completing the circle.

Understanding that a critical mass of agents can, through their reaction to the structure, restructure it reaffirms those activists who seek to change the symbolic differences structured into the sociocultural environment. Among feminist scholars, it is often been a question of the representation of gender in the media, and whether or not that representation reflects the reality of the sociocultural environment, and to what extent the representation creates that reality (van Zoonen, 1991). This consternation and debate is the backbone of their activism, to impress upon media producers the need to change the representation. However, such a direct assault is more persuasive if there is a groundswell consensus among media users who resist the gendered media products -- for what is more persuasive to a capitalist system than actions that affect profit? Operating from a dialogic model, activists could encourage agentic negotiation or resistance to gendered media through media literacy programs and their assumptions about gender, thereby mobilizing the masses to join the brigade (Jacobson, 2005).

Gender commonalities versus differences. Livingstone (1990) argued the mainstream media, in reporting minor significant differences without clarifying this distinction, artificially polarize the public's notion of gender. The fall-back position in our society or culture may be a biological or sociocultural explanation that is reductionist, essentialist and deterministic, over-simplifying a complex process and promoting courses of actions that prove to be ill-advised, unfeasible, and detrimental to individuals.

Investigating commonalities could have two practical implications: one psychological, and one economic. Janet Hyde, in discussing her gender similarity hypothesis, highlighted the various ways touting gender differences as a positivistic fact impairs both men and women in many facets of life, from interpersonal relationships to psychic well-being to occupational progression (1994, 2005). By

looking as much, if not more so, for commonalities, we uncover the means for deconstructing symbolic differences that prove psychologically and materially damaging to people.

From an economic viewpoint, finding new strategies to build audiences is increasingly important given the current atmosphere of fragmentation (Napoli, 2003). Fragmentation creates specialized media products for specific types of people, largely based on demographics (age, gender, ethnicity) or preferences (sports, movies, music) that are highly correlated with demographics (Turow, 1997). The practice focuses on differences and reinforces them by creating the impression circulating in a media environment that certain products are more appropriate for either gender to engage with. If a media producer is interested in expanding the consumer base, that producer should be focusing on the commonalities of engagings that elide over the differences.

Even before the rise of fragmentation, there were media products that contained more features that would be thought more preferred by women (ex. the soap opera, the "weepie" film) and others that were thought to be more preferred by men (ex. the western, the war film). And yet, there were still many texts that contained both masculine and feminine features to develop a cross-gender, and thus much more sizeable, audience (ex. *I Love Lucy, M*A*S*H, The Cosby Show*). Even in the modern United States, with its plethora of media products, shows like *American Idol, Dancing with the Stars*, *House*, and *Desperate Housewives* are examples that have both male and female fan bases, which translate into large ratings and audience shares.

There are also people who cross the gendered boundaries in their daily lives by engaging with media not targeted to them. Studies have examined women who engage with the largely masculine-directed media of superhero comics and digital games. While these women thoroughly enjoy these media, some say they engage as a resistance to gender stereotypes, while others feel like they are trespassing (Nyberg, 1995). Likewise, men who watch soap operas or other feminine media typically feel awkward discussing their enjoyment of the text, with very few feeling they can openly express their interest in such products (Jewkes, 2002).

At this time, it appears more acceptable for women to cross the gendered boundaries than men. While not a completely sanctioned act, such transgression by women is due to feminist calls for women to be the equal of men in how they are treated (Jacobson, 2005). However, there has not been a similar call for men to be the equal of women -- to be the stay-at-home dad, to cry openly, to prefer fashion over sports, and so forth (Harris, 2007; Jhally, 1999). As such, there continues to be higher cultural sanctions against men for gender transgressions, which would also apply to men enjoying media meant for women.

While some cross-gender products are more gender neutral due to the balancing of feminine- and masculine-directed features, more recently traditionally masculine texts are being created with some feminine features to bring in the female audience (Buttsworth, 2002; Ferguson, Ashkenazi & Schultz, 1997). This move can be seen in the relaunch of BBC's *Doctor Who*, where the Doctor's female companion became more of a love interest than in previous incarnations. Elevating the actress to essentially a co-star role, the show provided a female audience with a stronger female character to identify with while also providing romantic tension. The result has been a science fiction show, traditionally masculine-directed, that now has a rather large and active female audience. This move has been seen across a variety of science fiction and fantasy texts (ex. *Star Trek, Terminator, Star Wars, Buffy the Vampire Slayer,* etc), and has also been seen in other male-dominated genres, such as sports, horror and superhero comics (Nyberg, 1995; Shiokawa, 1999).

Populating traditionally feminine texts with masculine features is less common[5]. Keeping media meant for women free of masculine features provides a space in which feminine qualities can be propagated as the most beneficial method for success. For example, the movies on the cable network Lifetime showcase female heroines overcoming obstacles using feminine characteristics, instead of resorting to aggression like the female heroines of male-directed horror movies. Unfortunately, this decision may reinforce the idea that feminine texts are for women only, which could hurt the potential for a male audience. Without a shift in the

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[5] Current television serial, *Desperate Housewives*, is an example of a traditionally feminine text, the soap opera, drawing in sizeable male audiences around the world (Browne, 2005).

sociocultural structure to alleviate the pressure against men consuming media meant for women, male consumers may continue to suffer in silence.

Focusing on commonalities would provide insight for media producers to create and promote gender-inclusive media products, having both male and female audiences, by focusing on what people liked or disliked about the product regardless of gender. This way of categorizing audiences potentially allows for people to be segmented and studied based on processes of gratification, evaluation and utilization, instead of their sociodemographic memberships or psychological traits (Domzal & Kernan, 1983; Napoli, 2008; Ruggiero, 2000; Schrøder, Drotner, Kline & Murray, 2003). By promoting how a media product would be liked by anyone, media producers can expand their consumer base for any specific media product by showing why men would like certain things in traditionally feminine media product and vice versa. Learning more about the processes underlying engaging with a media product – the selecting, interpreting, and utilizing of the media product -- and the patterns of these processes across a variety of media engagings will prove more informative and predictive towards this goal.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THREE FIELDS

Just as the theories on the relationship between structure and agency are not limited to one academic discourse, this study's foundation is drawn together from a variety of methodological perspectives. Three research traditions have been particularly singled out for their contributions to understanding various aspects that constitute a media engaging. Each tradition has its weaknesses, which are sometimes offset by the others' strengths. However, certain shortcomings remain after considering all three traditions' approaches. After a brief overview of what each approach brings to this proposed study, these three shortcomings will be addressed as to why it is important to address them with this research.

Media uses and effects is an amalgamation of studies from two traditions: media effects and uses and gratifications (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990). When combined, this approach is chiefly concerned with identifying the conditions under which certain impacts will result from exposure to the media. This approach has a rich research tradition in that, of the three approaches, it has probably generated more empirical studies that are directly applicable to this study. This mass of findings can provide a solid literature review upon which to build the argument for this study, especially the role of gender as part of this conditional relationship between exposure and impact.

However, where it succeeds in quantity it lacks in quality. While there are increasingly more complicated models being produced to illustrate how a variety of media engaging variables intertwine, very few models attempt to account for the processes of media engagings, especially the interpretings (Gauntlet, 2005; Jensen

& Rosengren, 1990). Also, although gender as a demographic is often included in analyses, it is often without consideration for what gender is, and with a focus on gender differences in media exposure or impact and not gender commonalities.

While some media uses and effects studies are qualitative in nature, the vast majority are quantitative, which is part of the reason why they tend to study more concrete aspects of media engagings, such as selectings. *Cultural/critical reception studies* are the opposite in style, in that they tend to be qualitative in nature. Reception studies from this approach are chiefly concerned with either issues of agentic resistance or everyday media engagings (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990). The strength of this approach lies in its qualitative nature, as the methods employed seek more in-depth accounting of media engagings. Such studies have shown the polysemous nature of meanings in media products that is not accounted for in media effects and uses studies (Gauntlet, 2005).

However, like media uses and effects, the approach falls into essentialism by presuming certain aspects of media engagings -- particularly the explanations behind behaviors and processes -- as being couched in sociocultural factors (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; Morley, 2006; Höijer, 1992). Again, not enough has been done to appreciate interpretings more. As such, researchers may discuss gender as a construct and a process, but they will also tend to focus on gender differences and not commonalities.

Moving into a humanistic, and thus qualitative, approach, *humanities film studies* may seem like an odd approach to include here. Coming from a literature studies foundation, films studies has historically been more concerned with analyzing and critiquing texts than understanding the audiences of these texts (Meers, 2001; Staiger, 2002). However, there has been more work recently from this field on audiences, both historic movie audiences and more recent ethnographic accounts of movie-goers (Bacon-Smith & Yarbrough, 1991; Cherry, 1999).

The empirical branch of the field is built on the approach's real asset: the theorizing of reception. Ranging from psychoanalysis to cognitive psychology, various theoretical perspectives have been applied to understanding the relationship of the spectator to the film (Staiger, 2002; 2005). Of these theories, the cognitive

approach, with its focus on the process of meaning-making from a filmic text (Bordwell, 1986; 1989; Holub, 1984; Sweeney, 1995), gets closest to the need to understand interpretings during a media engaging. The chief problem lies in the dirge of systematic testing of these theories in actual cases of reception, along with the continuation of focusing on gender differences over gender commonalities.

At this point it may be obvious that two shortcomings can be found rather consistently across all three approaches. First, while film studies' theories on the process of meaning-making can shore up this theoretical lacking in the other two approaches, it nonetheless lacks empirical evidence on the processes of reception, which are likewise less studied in media uses and effects and critical/cultural reception studies. As such, there still remains work to be done to understand the interpreting aspect of media engagings.

Second, the use of gender, either theoretically or empirically, as a variable in these approaches occurs more on the desire to determine why men and women differ in their media engagings. Such a research focus is built on the assumption that this is the chief state of affairs -- that on average, men and women will not be alike in how they experience the media. Operating from such an assumption overlooks the potential for men and women's experiences to be otherwise.

Above these two shortcomings, connecting them, is a third. It is argued that to properly address the problem of interpretings, the study of media engagings must consider the temporal and spatial aspects of media engagings. That is, the nature of an encounter with a media product exists within certain situational factors that cue and/or constrain that encounter. Rarely do media uses and effects studies account for situated media engagings when ascertaining how media exposure, on average, results in an impact, or when examining reasons for an aggregate measure of exposure (see Reinhard & Dervin, 2007 for further discussion). Critical/cultural reception studies make look at a media engaging occurring within a specific context, but a largely ethnographic approach means any unique characteristics of certain time-space intersects are elided over in favor of the larger picture -- chiefly, the sociocultural environment and how it cues and/or constrains. Films studies would again be closest, in that they are theorizing about engagings with specific filmic

texts; but no empirical studies has to date been conducted that truly examined the situational context of a theatre-going or movie-watching experience as impacting the moment-by-moment aspects of engaging with the text.

The Encoding-Decoding-Recoding Model

The vast amount and variety of literature on media studies can be reduced to three main foci researchers take when they approach how to understand the relationships between sociocultural environment, media, and individual. This categorization scheme for media studies is based on what researchers for a particular study hope to understand about these relationships and how meaning circulates through them. Some researchers focus on the producers' process of creating; some on the consumers' process of engaging; some on the society with which they are intertwined and the process by which it impacts either; and some on the relationships possible between these three factors. One researcher may conduct a study based on one aspect of this relationship, while another researcher may focus on something different. Rarely will one researcher, in the course of one study, attempt to address all the facets involved in this system.

Across the variety of media studies that have been conducted throughout history and across types of media products, research has focused on the encoding, decoding and recoding of media products. Each foci is discussed below and then it will be explained how the model applies to this study; that is, how the variable and phenomenon of interest, gender, has been studied as part of the encoding, decoding, and/or recoding process.

With this background on the encoding-decoding-recoding model, I must make it clear that this model resulted from my surveying the breadth of media studies from both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This model organizes this wealth of research and discusses the commonalities between different theoretical and methodological approaches. I did not originate the terms and have only appropriated from other scholars (ex. Hall, 1973/1993; Hinds, 1996; Steele & Brown, 1995) to show their relationships with one another. My hope is that this model helps

us understand the interconnecting pieces of media industry, sociocultural environment and individual that forms the gendering process.

Encoding

Encoding studies are concerned with the production of a message and how various factors can impact this production. Encoding, whether in face-to-face or mediated communication, is the process by which some text comes to acquire some meaning(s), and, in the cases of mediated communication, how some medium is selected to transmit the text. As the process deals with meaning and the decision of how best to relay that meaning, a number of factors could impact it, from sociocultural to economic.

Encoding research proceeds by analyzing media products and methods of production to locate the media producer's motivations for encoding; to uncover how these factors influenced decision-making processes, with or without the producer's awareness of such influence. This encoding process, as it applies to gendered media, is discussed in terms of the assumptions and studies that have sought to deconstruct this meaning-making process. No original encoding research will be included in this study. However, past encoding work will be relied upon for their identification of the structural features in media products that trigger and reify symbolic differences. Additionally, the individuals' interpretations about media products are measured to compare against stereotypical assumptions about gender.

Those who are concerned with the representation of men and women in the media have come from all three fields. Uniting these three fields is the utilization of some form of text analysis to uncover the features of the text that could inform the potential media user about the norms for being a man versus a woman. All three approaches likewise build off the conception of the relationship between text and reader developed by literature studies and applied to mass media in humanities film studies. Focusing on the features of texts, as their literary counterparts had done, film theorists constructed an implied spectator who must react to the film in the ways dictated by the film's auteur.

Tied in to this text-centric, or apparatus, theory, spectatorship theories highlighted the works of psychoanalysts who attempted to uncover the latent, universal properties of humans. These theories were imported to film spectatorship to explain how the features of the films could produce the effects they did (Staiger, 1992; Mayne, 1993; Moores, 1994). Christian Metz employed Lacanian concepts of the imaginary and the "mirror" to describe the type of identification a spectator is allowed to engage in, while using Freud's views on fetishes to explain how the spectator is pleasured by the experience (Metz, 1975/2004; Penney, 2007). Laura Mulvey focused on concepts like voyeurism and fetishism to explain how male movie directors create a "male gaze" in their cinematography to further subjugate women for the pleasure of presumed male spectators (1975/2006).

As with other cultural theories on the monolithic power of the media to influence, spectatorship theories postulated a passive audience reception (Staiger, 2002) that believed all films would affect all viewers in the same psychoanalytical and ideological ways (Hietala, 1990). Louis Althusser's work on ideology and society's ability to interpolate subjects was adopted to explain how a film text could "suture" the spectator into a specific viewing position, thereby ensuring certain reactions to the text (Mayne, 1993; Stam, 2000). It was theorized that one could analyze the text's features and extrapolate who would be the implied and ideal spectator, the one who would truly understand the intentions of the film. With this conception, there was no need to seek out the real spectator, as the spectator existed nowhere but in the moment(s) of his engagement with that particular text, (Moores, 1994; Prince, 1996).

Gender was directly implicated in the discussion by Mulvey, and thus became a common focus for feminist film scholars. According to the spectatorship theories, women were being excluded from movies that structured into the film a masculine identification; in order to partake in the text, the woman would have to either place herself in the position of the woman being gazed at, or she would have to adopt the male spectator's presumed location and engage in a transgender identification (Mackinnon, 2002). Since the emergence of spectatorship theory, many media texts have been analyzed for how it is constructed for a masculine spectator. Scholars

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have also differentiated what would be media texts meant for a feminine spectator, as defined by the presence of traditionally feminine features (Kuhn, 2002). Determining for whom a media text is meant by deconstructing the text's features unveils gender stereotypes, highlighting the belief that media texts will reinforce gender differences by legitimizing the connection between specific feature and specific sex.

For those scholars operating from the critical/cultural reception studies, the purpose of text analysis lies in understanding the meaning that has been encoded into those features discussed by humanities film studies (Hermes, 2003; Andersen, 2003). Typically a study will focus on a select few media products, which are then "read" and critiqued in terms of how they reflect/reinforce the dominant discourse on gender. Arising out of feminist critiques of the media, the representation of women has been most studied to determine how the media perpetuates patriarchal notions of femaleness (Harris, 2004; van Zoonen, 1994), from sexually objectifying the female body (ex. Dietz, 1998) to the creation and maintenance of feminine archetypes, such as the femme fatale, damsel-in-distress, and the self-sacrificing mother (ex. Hyde, 2000).

However, men's studies have been on the rise over the past decade. While not matching the amount of work done on the representation of women, recognizing that masculinity is as much constructed as femininity has resulted in a focus on masculine representations (Mackinnon, 2002). The portrayal of men and assumptions about masculinity have been the focus of close reading (Harris, 2004), especially concerning body image, sexual prowess, and aggression (ex. Farvid & Braun, 2006; Jhally, 1999).

For quantitative scholars, the analysis consists of tallying certain aspects of the gender representations. These scholars can use the features and meanings discussed by the two previous fields as the basis to determine the frequency of these portrayals in the media. Both men and women are studied, but again the portrayal of women has received the most academic study due to feminist concerns (Craig, 1992). Basic counts focus on the number of women portrayed, given in percentages for how many texts are available and/or compared to how many men

are portrayed. Portrayals are also studied for more nuanced information, such as the role the woman has in the text, the things she says or does, her appearance, and other points of portrayal that could be coded for counting.

Such content analyses have occurred across all mass media, with particular emphases in advertisements, television, news, digital games, and music videos. For the majority of studies conducted over the past several decades, women have been presented less frequently, and with more stereotyped nuances, than their male counterparts. In comparison to men, women tend to be portrayed as more family focused, less aggressive, more concerned about appearance, and in smaller overall numbers (ex. Andersen, 2003; Craig, 1992; Jacobson, 2005; Harris, 2004).

Although there is some evidence that in some media, such as television, this portrayal is changing (i.e. Baker & Raney, 2007; Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995), a sampling of studies, presented in Table 2.1., indicate gender stereotypes still prevail across various types of media. Not only do these studies show gender differences in the portrayal, but also represent the second focus of encoding studies by discussing how the men and women who produce the media products do so differently.

Researchers	Published	Media Focus	Gender Results
Stankiewicz & Roselli	2008	Magazine advertisements	Women more likely to be portrayed as sex object
Miller & Summers	2007	Video game magazines	Male characters more heroes, female characters more sexualized
Monk-Turner, Kouts, Parris & Webb	2007	Radio advertisements	Men over-represented, more as authority, narrator
Samson & Huber	2007	Strip cartoons	Female cartoonists use more text, panels, different humor style
Len-Rios, Rodgers, Thorson & Yoon	2005	Newspapers	Men more in stories, photos than women
Taylor	2005	Men's magazines	Stereotypical and hetereo-normative portrayal of men
Coyne & Archer	2004	Television	Women more likely indirect aggression, men physical aggression
Stern	2004	Websites	Boys, girls differ in content, structure of home pages
Rodgers & Thorson	2003	News reports	Female reporters use diverse sources, less stereotyping, more positive stories
Escholz, Bufkin & Long	2002	Film	Women less lead roles, stereotyped portrayals

Table 2.1. Sample of Encoding Studies, 2002-2008

While quantitative media uses and effects research provides the prevalence of portrayals, critical/cultural reception qualitative research provides what may be worrisome about these portrayals. However, both of these field's approaches build on the assumptions from humanities film studies spectator theory in what may be the possible impact on men and women from engaging with them. Text analysis is thus useful for pointing out the potential range of decodings and recodings, but it is the purpose of empirical decoding and recoding studies to illustrate the reception of these gender portrayals.

<u>Decoding</u>

Decoding studies are concerned with people's selection and interpretation of media products by individuals, and how a variety of factors can impact these two aspects of engaging with the media. Research on this focus comes from uses-and-effects and reception studies, including Hall's (1973/1993) assertion that there are three main types of reception to a media text. The individual selects the media product, either willingly or by imposition, and interprets the features of the product to reconstruct the meaning(s) encoded in it. However, this transfer does not mean the encoder and decoder will match perfectly in their meaning-making – for Hall, the reception could range from in agreement, to negotiated, to oppositional (1973/1993). Determining the type of response comes from a number of factors, biological to psychological to sociocultural, that are argued for differences in how the decoder deconstructs the media product's features to reconstruct some meaning from it. Given the interpretive/performative approach of this study, how a person views him or her self in accordance with what is appropriate gender behavior may impact how a gendered media is selected and interpreted. A man who considers himself very masculine may be less likely to willingly watch a soap opera, and he may be more likely to interpret a romantic hero's tears as a sign of weakness.

A majority of media decoding studies are done to understand what accounts for the differences in meaning between the encoder and decoder -- is it something in the reasons for selection, or the way in which the media is interpreted? Trying to answer these questions makes it imperative for decoding research to focus on

understanding the "black box" of the person's mind from which needs, expectations, and evaluations arise. While a person's selection of a media product could be tracked by recording what media was used when, where and how much, most of the time the reasons for that selection cannot be inferred from any observable behavior. Oftentimes the mistrust of self-report is given for why interpretings are not studied. In terms of this study, the impetus is to understand these two aspects of gendered media engagings -- selectings and interpretings -- as they form the hows and whys of media engaging by relying on the recollections of individuals.

Decoding studies are primarily concerned with what leads individuals to decide to engage with the media products they do, and what sense they make out of the media product, or their interpretations of the media's content. Typical humanities film studies will assume both based on the features of the media product. As discussed above, gender is a concept used to predict what would be the ideal, although only potential, engaging: men engage with masculine features, women with feminine features. Gender as a variable to measure how people select and interpret media products is found in both critical/cultural reception studies and media uses and effects research

Of both aspects of the decoding process, it has been the differences in selecting and what accounts for these differences that have received the most attention. Again, this is understandable given the media industry's economic imperative. From this research we hear how men tend to be the consumers of sports, horror, action/adventure (especially violent or sexualized), news, digital games and comic books. Women, on the other hand, tend to be the consumers of romances (comedic and dramatic), soap operas, fashion or home economic shows, talk shows, and telephones (i.e. Bhatia & Desmond, 1993; Cherry, 1999; Knobloch, Callison, Chen, Fritzsche & Zillmann, 2005; Kuhn, 2002; Nyberg, 1995). The reasons for these differences have been theorized on a number of levels, from biological to sociocultural. Biological approaches focus on the gender differences, such as those found by Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), from cognitive capacities to aggressive hormones. Sociocultural approaches include the critical/cultural

inference of the gendering process, how material conditions impact the person's interpretation of the messages encoded in the media product (i.e. Morley, 1994).

In terms of interpreting a media product, studies again focus on gender differences, in one of two ways. Some studies will focus on how each gender interprets an entire text, such as an advertisement (i.e. Shields, 1999) or a TV show (i.e. Calvert et al, 2001). Results tend to show that men and women differ in how they interpret specific features of a media technology or text. In terms of these features, men and women have been shown to differ in who they identify with (i.e. Hoffner, 1996), how they describe the same content as either action or violence (i.e. Funk, 2001), and their reaction to the sexualized appearance of women (i.e. LaTour, 1990). More work on interpretings has been done from a qualitative approach, but the focus has been on one gender at a time, usually women, and oftentimes to locate acceptance or resistance (i.e. Austin, 1999; Durham, 1999; Press, 1991; Radway, 1984). As with selectings, reasons for gender differences in interpretings have been attributed to biological or sociocultural factors. As with selectings, more work needs to be done to understand commonalities between the genders, as well as the interpretation of sociocultural norms in how they may account for both commonalities and differences.

Even in looking over the past several years of research, the majority of studies that examine people's selectings and interpretings of media products do so using gender to separate people and thereby explain when a specific selecting or a specific interpreting will occur. Represented in Table 2.2 are examples of decoding studies that discuss some type of difference in how men and women engage with various types of media. While some studies do show gender differences diminishing, especially in relation to the internet (Debrand & Johnson, 2008; Gross, 2004; Li & Yu, 2008; Ono & Zavodny, 2005), many more studies indicate slight to major qualitative divergences that are seen in quantitative statistical differences. While they may not differ on their use of such media technologies, they may differ on their views of the technology and their own ability to engage with it (Bunz, Curry & Voon, 2007; Hargittai & Shafer, 2006). Thus, while gender may not be a

differentiating factor in the selection of what media product to engage, it is studied as a possible factor in the interpretation of that engaging.

Researchers	Published	Media Focus	Gender Results
Debrand & Johnson	2008	Email, IM	Women see email more useful communicating across distances
Knobloch-Westerwick	2007	Online news	Men and women choose different media depending on mood
Emmers-Sommer, Pauley, Hanzal & Triplett	2006	Film	Men prefer sex, violence, while women prefer love
Hald	2006	Pornography	Men consume more, at younger age, use more during sexual activity
Knobloch, Callison, Chen, Fritzsche & Zillmann	2005	Children's cartoons	Boys like aggressive stories, girls like nurturing stories
Mitra, Willyard, Platt & Parsons	2005	Websites	Men, women differ in types of websites prefer
Tsai & Lin	2004	Internet	Men see internet more for entertainment, women more as tool
Brown & Pardun	2004	Television	Boys, girls do not watch same shows
Greenberg, Sherry, Lachlan, Lucas & Holmstrom	2003	Video games	Men play and like games more, prefer physical games
Mazur & Emmers-Sommer	2002	Film	Men less tolerant homosexual lifestyle portrayed in film

Table 2.2. Sample of Decoding Studies, 2002-2008

Recoding

Recoding studies are concerned with the utilization of media products to impact the real world through the lives of media users. This focus is classically divided as occurring through passive media effects or active media uses. Research here seeks to understand the processes of incorporation and application, whereby the meaning in the media product comes to inform and influence the individual, either with or without the individual's awareness and acceptance. Through the individual's behavior with others and society in general, if a threshold is reached, this meaning comes to circulate back to and influence the larger society and culture. This circular nature of recoding can be seen in economic terms, in the demand and supply of media product. But it can change sociocultural values, such as homosexuality in Western societies due to the popularity of gay celebrities and characters.

The most common notion of media impacts deals with passive media effects

– from the fear of negative effects, such as sex and violence, to the possibility of positive effects, such as anti-smoking. Active media uses are still a media impact, but they occur when the user is actively aware of doing something because of his or her engaging with the media product, such as how the watching an environmental documentary inspires real-life conservation measures. An example comes from Jeanne Steele and Jane Brown's work on the Media Practice Model (1995), where they demonstrated how teenagers have appropriated specific aspects from their media engagings to construct an identity. While this study focused more on the decoding processes, it also addressed utilizings as part of the individual's engagings with gendered media.

Sometimes as a companion, sometimes as an implied result, recoding studies are often linked with decoding studies. Most media studies research is interested in how the media will impact the individual, and by extension that individual's sociocultural environment. This is the foundation for the history of media effects research, both qualitative in critical/cultural reception studies and quantitative in media uses and effects research, as it continues to dominate public thought and academic concern. Encoding studies tend to be the beginning of this process, as they provide information about prevalence and type of media messages that require decoding and recoding analyses. Decoding studies provide information as to what mediates the relationship between exposure to the encoded messages and the resultant impacts on the recoding into everyday life. In terms of exposure to gendered media, the recoding process could range from the more unconscious, passive media effects to the more conscious, active media uses.

When the focus is on media effects, theories on gender differences try to account for why and/or how an aspect of the media product affects one gender but not the other. Men tend to become more physically aggressive after consuming violent media, explained by biological hormones or sociocultural acceptance for such aggressive tendencies (i.e. Bartholow & Anderson, 2002). Women tend to be more scared by, or act as such, while watching horror movies, as explained by sociocultural socialization of appropriate behavior (Bryant & Miron, 2002). Men tend to be more aroused by pornography, explained by biological hormones and women's

disgust of the portrayals of women (i.e. Kipnis, 1992). The findings go on. Locating gender differences in passive media effects becomes a way for various theoretical approaches to perfect their postulates and explain these gender differences in other aspects of everyday life.

Commonalities have been studied. For some studies, the media have been shown to impact both men and women similarly. Both men and women can become desensitized to violence, can come to be cultivated into seeing the world through the "mean world syndrome", or can come to endorse gender stereotypes for themselves and those of the opposite sex (ex. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli & Shanahan, 2002; Jacobson, 2005). Because of the concern of passive media effects, it is logical that studies would seek to determine when gender will predict different reactions to the media, but likewise may be interested in when there is no difference between them. In either case, policy-makers, parents, and other concerned citizens want to know what could be done to dispel negative effects and create positive ones.

As with the decoding focus, recoding studies interested in passive media effects from the past several years have continued this focus on gender differences. Unlike the decoding focus, less has been discussed about how men and women are similar in how the media impacts them. There are studies using gender to compare men and women after exposure to some type of media product. Or there are studies that examine only men or only women, with the assumption that there is an underlying difference that requires one or the other to be the sole focus for the understanding of a particular media effect. Represented in Table 2.3 are those studies that compare men and women within the same study on their exposure to some type of media.

For the second type of recoding, less work has been done from a quantitative approach. Qualitative approaches have been used to understand the nuances of active media and how the individual fits the media product into his or her life. The focus has more frequently described what different people do with the media products, such as Steele and Brown's (1995) studies of adolescent bedrooms as reflections of their identity development through media use. Studies dealing specifically with gender tend to focus on gender differences in how the media is

brought into the everyday practices of individuals (i.e., Götz, Lemish, Aidman & Moon, 2005). Because such studies have been more limited in terms of who is studied and how often such research is conducted, less is known about this process and the extent to which there are gender differences and commonalities.

Researchers	Published	Media Focus	Gender Results
Moriarty & Harrison	2008	Television, eating disorder	Overall television exposure linked with more eating disorders for girls
Eisend & Moller	2007	Television, body image	Viewing body image impacts women's sense of self, consumption
Chiou	2006	Internet	Men disclose sexual information more
Grabe & Kamhawi	2006	News	Men, women differ in what recall, negative vs. positive messages
Youn	2006	Pornography	Men more sexually aroused after exposure
Barrett & Barrington	2005	News photographs	Women more influenced by positive picture, men by negative picture
Orth & Holancova	2004	Advertisements	Women less favorable toward women portrayed as superior to men
Kuntsche	2004	Television, video games	Exposure to violence led to girls more indirect violence
Cantor, Mares & Hyde	2003	Sexual media content	Men recalled physical aspects, women relational aspects
Bartholow & Anderson	2002	Video games	Men tend more violent after playing than women

Table 2.3. Sample of Recoding Studies, 2002-2008

Goals of this study

Considering just these samples of decoding and recoding studies, the overall findings match gender stereotypes. Indeed, the structure of the studies appears to have been based on gender stereotypes: studying men on the topics of sex or aggression; or, studying women on the topics of relationships or appearance. These gender stereotypes existed prior to the constructing, conducting, analyzing and reporting of the study, and the fact that the findings matched the stereotypes only highlights the criticism of research focusing on gender differences as reinscribing those differences. How can we expect to overcome these stereotypes in the sociocultural environment when studies continue to show them as existing, helping to naturalize the assumption that men are one way and women are another?

This study sought to surmount the shortcomings common to research across the fields, and to address the issue of gender with an approach to explore gendered media engagings for the potential for gender commonalities as well as gender differences. In order to do so, this study needed to include: the individual's interpretive stance; the situatedness of media engagings; and, sense-making instance that constitute a media engaging process.

The interpretive stance. Media studies typically focus on the *whats* of engaging -- who, when, where, what -- over the *hows* and *whys* of the engaging[6]. "Whats" are concerned with identifiable features of the media engaging: *who* is the nature of the person; *when* is the temporal nature of the engaging, be it singular or plural; *where* is the spatial nature of the engaging; and *what* is the nature of the media products being engaged. Questions of on "how" and "why" are focused on actions, on the processes that occur within media engagings, and are thus a focus on the interpretive stance of the individual within the media engaging: *how* is the means by which some aspect of the engaging came to be, while *why* is the reason that aspect came to be. The answer to *whys* may be some material condition, but it is the interpretation of that condition that produces some performative act, such as a sense-making instance of an engaging with a gendered media product.

Media effects studies and critical/cultural approaches have historically been more concerned with the whats than the whys and hows, although the rise of seeing media users as active has brought more focus to the hows and whys (Livingstone, 2003; 2004). The more control the individual media user has over the *whats* of the engaging process, then the more important it is to understand the more interpretive sense-making of the individual's media engaging to understand how they lead to the performative acts.

Antony Giddens admonished researchers on the failure to fully understand the human as an interpretive animal and a "purposive agent" who is capable, if allowed, to discuss the constraints faced, as well as any intentions (1979/2002, 1984). Both quantitative and qualitative researchers presume to do such, but they

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[6] My understanding of these questions, or the English words used to elicit a an answer, comes from research conducted for the IMLS-OCSC-OSU project, as discussed in Chapter 7 of the project report (Dervin, Reinhard, Kerr, Song, & Shen, 2006).

then fall back upon their respective social sciences or critical/cultural perspectives to some form culprit of essentialism (Livingstone, 1994; Morley, 2006). Media uses and effects research falls back to demographics, personality, and physiological characteristics, whereas critical/cultural relies on social positions to explain their findings. With their respective units of analysis being the individual and the social category, they are less focusing on the creative tactics used to cope with everyday life, whether it is in resistance to domination or just "going with the flow" (Fiske, 1989/2003, 1992; Grossberg, 1989; Lull, 1995).

Naturally, those who typically benefit from this research -- policy-makers and media producers -- are more interested in the *whats* as it helps design intervention programs or marketing campaigns to serve their respective goals of protection and persuasion. Thus have children and teenagers historically been studied in the hope of preventing negative behaviors while promoting socially acceptable ones. Much research today segments the potential audience along demographic lines, such as ethnicity, gender, age, and class -- both to understand how such boundaries may account for media effect differences, and to determine the extent to which these segments can be better protected or persuaded, providing maximum return on investments of time and capital.

But in an increasingly media fragmented world, the question of categorization is beginning to shift. Napoli (2008) recorded how researchers for the media industry have begun to pay more attention to the psychographic characteristics of their audiences than the sociodemographic – to be more attuned to the needs, interests and preferences than the gender, age, ethnicity, and so forth. However, to fully understand these psychographics, a more interpretive framework is required, with new ways of measuring the sense-making of the individual. A focus on the hows and whys over the whats is one possible means to do such.

Situatedness of media engagings. In order to better locate and understand the hows and whys, it is necessary to move the empirical focus from generalized media engagings to the individual's recall of specific instances of engaging. McQuail, Blumler and Brown (1972) had indicated the complex and potentially contradictory nature of media use and gratifications within one instance of a media

engaging. If a person can have multiple gratifications within one use, it seems illogical to assume the same gratification would occur across multiple uses, as measured in aggregate when asking for recall on general use. Media engagings change depending on the characteristics of the situation in which the media engaging occurs (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974; Spirek, Dervin, Nilan & Martin, 1999; Wendel & Dellaert, 2005).

Asking media users about general media engagings assumes there is stability to the media engagings in reasons for use and how interpreted. In other words, a person who repeatedly engages with the same media, either a technology or a text, is assumed to do so to gratify the same need. Critics have argued that the fluidity of media engagings across time and space means researchers should expect and accept non-stability in the characteristics of media engagings (Massey, 1995; Reinhard & Dervin, 2007). A person who says they watch a television serials like *Lost* will watch each new episode and have a different engaging with them, even with episodes seen in reruns. Any attempt to capture a stable, average representation of the person's engaging with *Lost* will elide over the differences in these engagings and thus be unrepresentative of the true experience the person has watching the series.

Ultimately, asking people to speak about their average media use mostly provides information about the *whats*, as the nature of the media engaging may be the least to change across time and space. Even if the focus is on whys, such as with uses-and-gratifications, oftentimes the results are a garbled collection of whys that can be seen as a reason why researchers have trouble creating a standard typology of gratifications (Rubin, 2002; Ruggiero, 2000). Research that looks into hows typically does so in hypothetical or laboratory conditions, which may be unlike that person's normal media use and therefore dissimilar to their everyday processing of media information. Research into any of these questions must be focused on discerning patterns from situated experiences, either as they happen or as they are recalled, to discover the truth of the person's experience engaging with that media product.

Sense-making instances. With his background in phenomenology, Roman Ingarden developed the idea that texts contain points of indeterminacy, or gaps, where the reader has to supply his or her own information in order to "see" what the text is "saying". These gaps, or sense-making instances of the engaging process, could also be filled in a variety of ways because they are reliant on what the reader brings to the text, such that the same reader may engage with the same text differently if the first time he was happy and the second time he was sad (Holub, 1984). Wolfgang Iser adopted Ingarden's gaps to explain how the reader moves through a text; a reader has a "wandering viewpoint" and use what the text has provided to construct expectations for what will come, thereby creating a true "page turner" (1978). Iser argued that the placement of the gaps was strategic, so as to manipulate the way in which reader had to fill them to move on. While these theories were developed specifically for literary texts, film studies and reception studies scholars have adopted the idea of "gap-filling" to explain the role of the spectator in constructing the film's meaning (Allen, 1992).

The sense-making instances being focused on here is not specifically the moment-by-moment reception of a media product as discussed by these reception theorists. Instead, the concept of the individual dealing with gaps in life (Dervin & Formen-Wernet, 2003), such as sense-making through the process of a gendered media engaging, is employed as to how the individual sees the media product being involved in his or her life at the time – that is, in the situation that individual is enmeshed in and that the media product has some role. Just as a person's experience with a particular media product is not an aggregate, occurring over various instances of space/time, so too is the situation being faced not an aggregate of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Instead, as the person moves through the situation, a series of interpretive/performative acts are required (Blumer, 1969; Dervin & Foreman-Wernet, 2003). Each interpretive/performative act constitutes a sense-making instance of that engaging process.

An analysis of the process allows for the comparison of each individual's unique engaging not on the aggregate level but on the level of the sense-making instances as they occurred within situations of engaging with gendered media

products. The analysis allows the researcher to understand how the individual brings into the engaging a set of evaluative criteria as the *why* that determines *how* they engage, which is connected to *what* is their holistically constructed reception of the product. While the overall results, or *whats*, of the engaging may reflect the type of stereotyped results found in the decoding and recoding studies above, perhaps the *hows* and the *whys* will reveal non-gendered aspects of engaging with media products as they are more based on the individual's interaction with a particular situation.

Research Question

The purpose of this study was to understand individuals' experiences with gendered media that was meant for theirs and the other gender. Using the dialogic interpretive/performative model of the gendering process as the framework for constructing this research, this study sought to uncover gender commonalities and gender differences in the gendered media engaging processes of selectings, interpretings, utilizings, and the conditions in which either manifests.

Employing an interpretive approach, individuals were asked to recall situated media engagings to explore whether or not these engagings differ if the media was engaged with once versus repeatedly, as something same-gender or cross-gender, and to what extent the sense-making instances of the engaging processes could be used to explore these commonalities, or convergings, and these differences, or divergings, between individuals.

The research question was simply this: Under what conditions do men and women converge and diverge in their selectings, interpretings and utilizings, and in what way do these convergings and divergings reflect gender stereotypes as part of the interpretive/performative approach to gender?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

METHODOLOGY

Being methodological

Each researcher, regardless of terrain of study, is a member and thus representation of a particular discourse community that has formed around any given phenomenon. Discourse refers to the ways of speaking about the phenomenon that limit how we can come to know that phenomenon (Dervin, 2003b). A discourse forms around ontological and epistemological tenets that form the doctrine of how that phenomenon is believed to exist, and how someone can come to know more about its existence. The community consists of those individuals who ascribe to those beliefs. When it comes to conducting research, each researcher is driven to understand the reality of the phenomenon based on their adherence to the tenets of their particular discourse community.

Methodology is the way in which the doctrines of the discourse community become translated into organized procedures for conducting research. Because the doctrines shape how the researcher believes knowledge can be obtained about a phenomenon, the methods chosen to learn more about the phenomenon will correspond to the tenets of the community. Thus, to be methodological is to design, conduct, and analyze research in ways that are philosophically governed by the metatheory to which you adhere.

My adherence is to a number of metatheoretical persuasions, from Völkerpsychologie and phenomenological hermeneutics to political economic and

cultural criticism to deconstructivism. As such, I need a methodology that will accommodate my desire to give voice to the individual to tell me about his or her own experiences and interpretations, but not forgetting the need to balance such agency against material conditions and structures. I find that Dervin's Sense-Making is an approach that best accommodates my multifaceted methodological needs.

Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology

Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology (SMM) offers a solution to the theoretical and empirical shortcomings from the three fields, as well as reflecting the dialogic relationship between structure and agency advocated by the interpretive/performative theoretical framework. Indeed, this methodology has been used in various other media studies to improve understanding of selecting, interpreting, and utilizing media products as well as tackling the structure/agency question (Dervin, 2008: Dervin & Foreman-Wernet, 2003; Nilan & Dervin, 1999). This methodology provided a means to study media engagings that was interpretive, situated, and focused on the sense-making instances, due to the theoretical foundation of Sense-Making.[7]

First, coming from interpretive philosophies, Sense-Making sees human beings as sense-making beings. Humans are constantly trying to make sense of the world around them and in order to move through life -- to understand what is happening, why, and how, and to use this information to make decisions, to move forward, to seek out support, and so on. Humans are not simply programmed automatons, determined by demographic, psychological or even sociocultural traits. While these traits, often imposed upon them by structures, may cue and constrain the ways in which the human makes sense of the world, humans still have the ability, and indeed imperative, to struggle with and make sense of the multitude of stimuli and information that saturates the world in which they live.

This impetus to make sense means there may be situations that are interpreted as allowing the person to engage in more rote habits of behaviors. But

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[7] Subsequent discussion of the Sense-Making Methodology relies upon three main texts (Dervin, 2008: Dervin & Foreman-Wernet, 2003; Nilan & Dervin, 1999) as well as work completed as part of the IMLS-OCLC-OSU project (Dervin et al, 2006).

there are also times when aspects of the situation prompt the sense-making human to stir from this automatic state and more actively engage with the situation to determine the best course of action. Perhaps there is some problem -- a struggle, confusion or muddling -- that they have never had to face before. Sense-Making mandates investigating those situations when rote behavior is being engaged and comparing them to/against/with those situations when creative behavior is being utilized. In both types of situations, the goal is to understand how the person's process of making sense of the situation led them to engage in either type of behavior.

Coming from critical philosophies, another important component of Sense-Making is the view of power as an influence on the sense-making human being. This tenet is influenced by the work of critical scholars theorizing about the overarching influence of social structures and their ideologies and discourses in shaping the human being. Without acknowledging the cuing and constraining of social structures, the sense-making human would be too highly voluntaristic and agentic, in complete control of all his or her actions, with the problems of chaotic plurality and unpredictability that follow.

Instead, Sense-Making recognizes that there are sociocultural structures that exist and have a material presence in the reality of the human. Instead of taking the rather deterministic and pessimistic stance of classic critical scholarship, Sense-Making conceptualizes this sense-making human as able to negotiate and struggle with these overarching influences as s/he moves through life. Just as situating the discussion of a phenomenon can illuminate those times of rote versus creative behavior, humans can discuss/theorize/complain about the ways in which they see the power of these social structures entering their lives.

As theorists for their own lives, Sense-Making Methodological interviews provide space for the person to discuss how they see power, and the internal and external behaviors they engage in that confirm or resist such power. The actual structure of a Sense-Making study requires the researcher to consider these power issues in how humans are studied. In the case of an interview, the researcher is aware of how powerful his or her position is in relation to the interviewee -- the

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interviewer is often labeled as the authority or the expert, and thus imbued with daunting power over how the interview proceeds. The mandate is to remove as much as possible any imposition of the interviewer on the interviewee -- to ask short but precise questions to prompt the interviewee to start a dialogue with his or her own theories, interpretations, and processes of sense-making. This distancing continues into the analysis phase, where the researcher is enjoined to recognize that his or her interpretations of the interviewee's interpretations are not necessarily the interpretations that matter the most. The interviewer is directed to empower the interviewee by having the interviewee deliberate over his or her sense-making, and to use these deliberations as given with as minimal interpretation into themes or codes by the researcher as possible.

This reduction of the interviewer's presence is guided by another of Sense-Making's tenets: the focus on hows over whats. Hows represent the processes by which sense-making enables the human to engage with and move through the situation. In times when the human sees some gap or struggle or problem on the road of life that must be dealt with, the Sense-Making researcher is interested not simply in what was done (ex. what media did you use to make yourself feel better?) but also how this "what" was done (ex. how did using this particular media make you feel better?). The whats being dealt with can vary incredibly between situations, but the hows of dealing with those whats provide insight into that human's sense-making processes and may be more likely to transcend situations.

In order to understand the hows, Sense-Making calls for a focus on the verbs a person uses rather than the nouns. Verbs represent actions, the internal and external behaviors a human engages in to make sense of and move through a situation. Verbs are the descriptions of the processes, whereas nouns label the components of the situation, encapsulate an abstract and make it knowable to others. But because they do encapsulate what may be the abstraction of a sense-making process, this nouning can carry with it power; once an animal is labeled a lion by an expert, it is hard for a layperson to call it a leopard. A methodological Sense-Making researcher must be aware of this potential problem and would do their best to avoid putting nouning questions into their interviews in order to avoid

labeling, summarizing, or interpreting some action of the sense-making human in a way that the individual does not.

The researcher's activity fosters a more neutral space in which the sense-making human can engage with his or her own interpretive activities as s/he works through just how and why s/he did what s/he did in that situation. Because a human is seen as having the ability and imperative to make sense, to form an understanding of the world, the process of this construction is the formal data gathered and constructed in a Sense-Making research study. This interpretive activity is a dialogic surround, prompted by the verbing questions the researcher asks of the person. The person is asked to engage with how s/he felt and thought when struggling or coping with the situation. But these more concrete whats are paired with considerations for how s/he was helped or hindered in moving down the road, how power and agency were seen as involved, and how the bridge over the gap of this problem was constructed to assist in moving through the time and space of that situation.

The entire methodological metaphor is depicted in the Sense-Making Triangle of Figure 3.1 below, as originated and copyrighted by Dervin (Dervin, 2008; Dervin & Foreman-Wernet, 2003). The goal of an interview constructed on this metaphor is to triangulate the interviewing session on these three main components: the nature of the situation the individual is moving through; the nature of the gap that must be bridged to move through the situation; how the gap was bridged; and the nature of the outcome that results from moving through the situation. All components have a series of questions designed to elicit the individual's interpretation on them. Only when these three components are elicited and placed into relationship with one another can the individual's sense-making journey truly be understood.

Application to this study

This study was designed with this logic to combine the triumvirate importance of interpretive stance, situationality and sense-making instance. If we consider gender to be part of the interpretive/performative sense of self of the agent in response to the nature/nurture structure, and that the performative is at least

unconsciously informed by the act of interpreting the structural factors of a situation, as those structural factors represent the nature/nurture structure, then we must engage with the agent's interpretive stance to understand the phenomenon of gender as it operates within any situation, and particular to this study situations of engaging with gendered media.
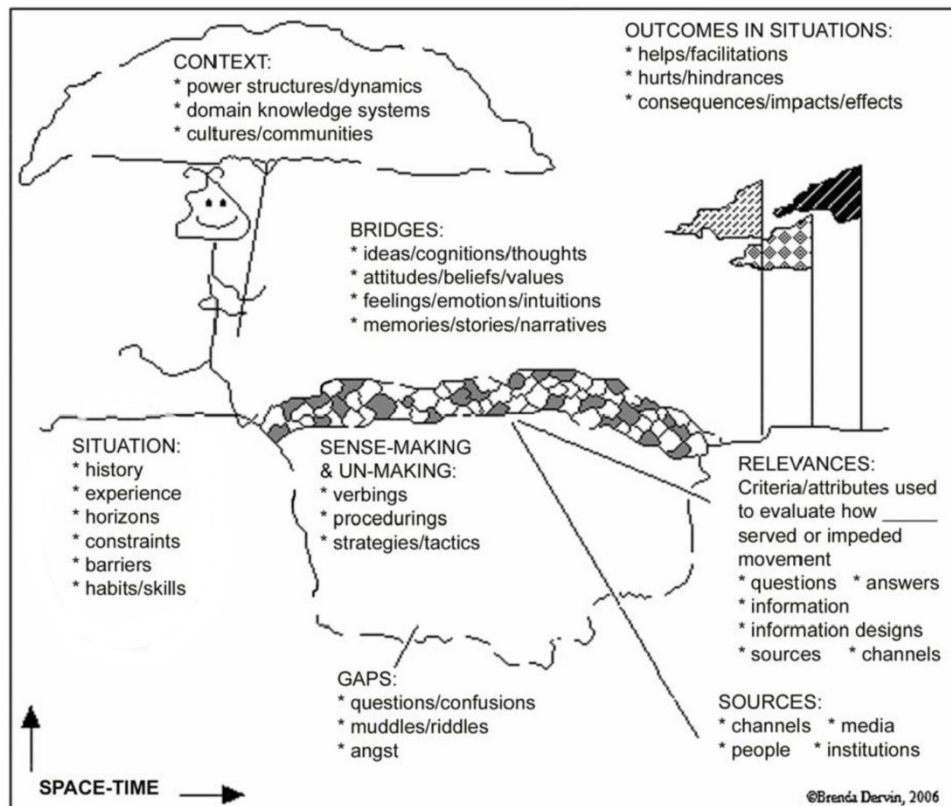
Figure 3.1. Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology Triangle Metaphor

The Sense-Making Methodology has been applied to various aspects of media studies in the past, from encoding to decoding to recoding. On the encoding level, Higgins (1994) sought to understand the interpretive stance of volunteer community television producers on production. Given the focus of Sense-Making on interpretation, a number of studies have focused on the selectings and interpretings of decoding. Shields (1994) found differences in how men and women negotiated the messages as they interpreted gendered advertisements, while Dworkin,

Foreman-Wernet and Dervin (1999) examined how different classes decode messages. By having people discuss their experiences with high and low-brow cultural products, Foreman-Wernet (2002) found that people's decodings and recodings of these typically polarized products was far more complex than discussed by scholars and intellectuals. Spirek, Dervin, Nilan and Martin (1999) found different types of media engagings between hypothetical situations, where a specific reading media task was imposed on people, and experiential situations, where people recalled their most recent leisure time reading. Focusing on how people have used the media as an example of active recoding, Dervin and Song (2005) asked people to recall how the media helped in these situations and then went deeper by asking how these helps helped, and how those helps helped, and so forth until no new help was mentioned.

With the breadth of types of media studies Sense-Making has been applied to, it has been shown to be useful and informative when approaching an individual's media engagings from an interpretive perspective. Its application here is for reasons similar to what has been accomplished in previous Sense-Making studies: a focus on the interpretive stance; investigating situationality; and the examination of the sense-making instances of a situation.

This study is a focus on the selectings, interpretings, and utilizings of gendered media by individuals over the course of their lives, and to what extent these media engagings replicated gender differences found in the sociocultural environment. As the goal is to understand the processes of media engagings -- hows, whys and whats -- it is necessary to conduct an interpretive investigation of their actual media engagings. Using Sense-Making, individuals were asked to recall specific instances on engaging with gendered media, both those meant for their gender and those meant for the other gender. By focusing on specific situations of media engaging, the person's experiences and evaluations of the gendered media were thoroughly probed as manifestations of the interpretations of that engaging.

Each interview for each situation of a gendered media engaging have the same questions, designed to focus on specific parts of the individuals' engaging process. In other words, how they saw their moment-by-moment movement through

situation as a series of interpretive/performative acts are elicited by the questions of the interview. Questions ranged from what led to the situation to how the individual saw his or her sense of self at the time of the engaging. The answers to these questions were the sense-making instances used to compare men and women within the situations of their media engagings.

METHOD

Sample

The only requirements for participating in this study were: my ability to ascribe the sociodemographic status of gender to the interviewee; and, the interviewee's ability and desire to discuss experiences with media products they saw as gendered in some way. Constructing this study as I was from an interpretive approach, it is hypocritical of me to assign gender to the interviewees; however, one final question asked all individuals to ascribe gender to themselves. For all interviewees, my assignment of gender demographically matched theirs interpretively. Operating then with these two parameters, a convenience sample of college students and individuals solicited online and from a local fan convention were gathered. The sample was gathered less to represent general sociodemographic and psychographic categories and more to characterize a range of experiences in the hope of finding patterns in the process of engaging with gendered media.

Over a span of four months, 80 men and women participated in the study. Participation ranged from being interviewed by myself, either in person or over phone or instant messenger, to interviewing themselves similar to an in-depth open-ended questionnaire. This collection occurred in two rounds, where the first round included self-interviews and the second round did not. In the end, only those individuals interviewed by myself were included in the analysis, resulting in 21 men and 22 women. With a goal to problematize rather than reify research on gender and media, smaller samples are commonly used in qualitative studies to illustrate the challenge to the average or status quo (Ruddock, 2001).

The majority of the interviewees were Caucasian, with slightly more ethnicities represented in the pool of women. However, the age range for the women was less diverse, from 20-29 years old, while the range for the men was from 19-44 years old. Comparatively, more men than women were solicited outside of the university setting, but the range of education across the sample was commensurate.

Interview Design

Using Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology, an in-depth interview was constructed that asked people to recall their experiences with four types of gendered media engaging. The interview was constructed as a combination of SMM Life-Line and Micro-Element interviewing protocols (Dervin, 2008). The Life-Line protocol was utilized to ask interviewees to recall all gendered media engagings over the course of their lives. The Micro-Element protocol was utilized when asking interviewees to recall their interpretive and performative acts for selected engagings.

Overall, the interview was structured to create a 2x2x2 design. The interviewees' interpretive and sociodemographic status as one or the other gender was one factor. Another factor asked them to recall their experiences with media meant for women and those meant for men. All media products were gendered as the interviewee saw fit; I did not impose any examples of what I meant by gendered media, only examples of what I meant by media products. Interviewees were additionally asked to recall for these gendered media products those that they engaged with once and only once, and those that they engaged with repeatedly over some span of time.

The combination of seeing who the media was meant for and how often it was engaged with led to four types of *Gendered Media Engaging Situations*: Meant for Men Used Once; Meant for Men Used Repeatedly; Meant for Women Used Once; and, Meant for Women Used Repeatedly. For analysis purposes, situations are sometimes referred to as cross-gender media engagings, or cross-gendering, when men are engaging with media products they interpret as meant for women, and vice versa for women. The situations will be referred to as same-gender media

engagings, or same-gendering, when men engaged with media products seen as meant for their own gender, and likewise for women. This terminology is used only when the nature of the results is illuminated by being one or the other.

In the Life-Line section of the interview, or Section A in the interview template seen in Appendix A, the interviewees were asked to list specific media engagings for each of the four types of Gendered Media Engaging Situations. Before the interview was conducted, a table was constructed with four columns, one for each type. Interviewees listed the age they were when they engaged with a gendered media product, either just that once or for the first time. For the Micro-Element aspect of the interview, or Sections B-E, the interviewees were asked to select one media engaging from each column as the situation to discuss. All these individuals included in the sample had at least one experience for each of the four situations. Thus, 172 situations were analyzed to compare men and women in how they converge and diverge in their interpretings, selectings and utilizings of gendered media products.

For each specific situation, interviewees were asked to discuss how they interpreted the media product, how they saw it connecting to their life, and how they saw it connecting to their sense of gender. The interview protocol was structured with a series of questions to elicit various sense-making instances from a person's experience with the gendered media product. These sense-making instances both reflect the encoding-decoding-recoding categorization from Chapter 2 as well as the SMM approach to interviewing discussed above. The exact questions used in the interview are found in the template in Appendix A. Those questions that served as the sense-making instances analyzed in this study are discussed below in Table 3.1.

At the beginning of each of the four Micro-Element sections, the interviewee discussed why they choose the media product as being directed to one gender and not the other. This question measured the interpreting of the media product as meant for men or meant for women. After getting this interpretation, the bulk of the interview for that engaging focused on the situation of the engaging: what led to the engaging; what led them to use this product only once or repeatedly; and then the series of SMM developed questions to elicit specific aspects of dealing with the

situation (Dervin, 2008). The first two questions measure the selecting of the media product, once and repeatedly. Of the set of SMM questions, the sense-making instance studied here was a measure of recoding: how helpful was the engaging at that time in the interviewee's life. For each of these questions, a second level of probing asked the interviewees to consider how their answer related to what was happening in their life at the time of the engaging, as well as how it connected to their views on the sociocultural assumptions about gender. This last question was another measure of interpreting within the situation.

Sense-Making Instance	SMM Question(s)	# Codes Developed	Total # Codes Possible Per Situation
Gendered Media Product	Selection from Life-Line table, each column	18 media product categories	• 1 code • Unique media product engaging
Why Gendered	• What is it about this media product that leads you to say it was meant for men (women)? AND • What is it about this media product that leads you to conclude that it is generally not directed to women (men)?	7 how interpretings	• 7 codes • Each unique mention coded across the locations
Why Initiated	What was happening in your life that led you to this encounter?	8 selecting reasons	• 8 codes • Each unique mention
How Volitional	Was your encounter with this media product something that just happened, you voluntarily journeyed into, or something imposed on you?	7 how selectings	• 1 code • Three responses combined into seven possible answers
Why Stopped, Continued	• What explains to you why you did not come back to this media? OR • What explains to you why you repeatedly used this media?	8 selecting reasons	• 8 codes • Each unique mention
How Helped	• Did your experience with this media help or facilitate you at that point in time? If so, how? AND/OR • Did you learn anything from your experience with this media at that point in time? If so, what?	13 how utilizings	• 13 codes • Each unique mention across the locations
How Saw Gender	Do you see [answer to previous question] as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?	9 gender interpretings	• 99 codes • Follow-up question, 11 locations analyzed • Each unique mention across the locations

Table 3.1. Coding Schemes for Sense-Making Instances

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The interviews conducted in person were recorded with a digital voice recorder. The interviews conducted over the phone were recorded using the VOIP program Skype. The interviews conducted over an instant messenger used either AOL or Yahoo's program. The average length of the interviews was two hours, with a range from forty-five minutes to three hours.

For the interviews conducted in person or over the phone, extensive notes were taken of all the interviewee's answers. For the interviews conducted over IM, the entire transcript of the interview was copy-and-pasted into a Microsoft Word file. To prepare for analysis, these handwritten notes and transcripts were transferred into a standard template and printed out. Audio files were later utilized to double-check all coding procedures and to acquire direct quotes to illustrate the codes.

Analysis

Methodology for coding. The analytical approach to this study was to produce results that are exploratory and descriptive. To accomplish this, the interviews were coded to uncover themes using grounded theory practices and metaphorical SMM codes. Both qualitative approaches have been used in the past to understand similar processes as those investigated here.

Grounded theorizing has a long history in qualitative research for systematically creating categories of themes that could then be used to analyze data. Developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), grounded theory uses an inductive method for developing coding categories based on the gathered data. With iterative passes through the material, categories emerge as grounded in the language of the participants. The end goal is a series of categories that are mutually exclusive and yet retaining a level of reliability and validity in faithfully representing the participants' interpretive stances.

Grounded coding occurred when a new scheme needed to be developed; this was the case for all but one scheme. This scheme focused on the interviewee's utilizings from the media engaging, and used Dervin's Helps scheme, which I have used previously in the same form as applied to this study (Dervin, et al, 2006). This coding scheme has been routinely used to understand what was the final outcome of

the situation – what was the benefit gained from engaging with this situation? Naturally, not all situations will be beneficial, or completely so, and to reflect this fact the Helps scheme has a counterpart in the Hurts scheme, which focuses on a different sense-making instance in the interview. For this analysis, only the Helps scheme was used due to its overlap with the uses-and-gratifications concept from media studies, which is discussed further in Chapter 8.

Developing coding schemes. Coding schemes were developed to represent what media products were discussed as being gendered, as well as six types of sense-making instances discussed by the interviewees. These instances were chosen because they reflect the interviewees' selectings, interpretings, or utilizings during that media engaging. All coding schemes are located in Appendix B. Each coding scheme has a uniqueness to its design that will be discussed in the results chapter dedicated to that scheme.

The general procedure for coding began with either grounded iterative passes or the application of the SMM scheme, each focusing on specific answers to specific questions to represent specific sense-making instances. Developing the grounded iterative schemes occurred over four separate passes, while only one pass was needed to verify the applicability of the Helps scheme. For the first pass, all possibly unique themes or Helps were highlighted in a color specific to that scheme. For grounded theorizing, the unique themes were placed into categories based on similarities not of *what* was being said (except for the gendered media products), but on *how* what was said reflected the selecting or interpreting of the individual. The exact nature of the *how* versus *what* distinction is clarified for the schemes in their respective chapters.

Fine tuning of the mutual exclusivity of the categories continued into round one of coding. There were two rounds of coding, separated by a week. Round one utilized the printed out notes and transcripts, applying the coding scheme to the highlighted segments as well as verifying that no other segment at the location(s) specified by the scheme could be coded. These codes were written directly unto the transcripts and transferred unto code sheets, which were used for double checking reliability during round two. For the second pass, those interviews that had audio

files were listened to at the coded sections. The audio files allowed verification of how well the notes reflected what was said by the interviewee, thereby reliably checking what the proper code for that location was. While not as strong as intercoder reliability, this intracoder reliability process did finally produce stable enough codes that could be used to organize the quotes and create a statistically viable data corpus.

Appendix C contains an example of a coded situation from an interview conducted over instant messenger. The example is from a man who discussed a media product he interpreted as meant for women, the television serial *Sex and the City*, but that it was also something he has watched repeatedly since first being exposed to it at age 19. The example shows the color scheme, the coding labels, and the locations for the coding, as described next.

Units of analysis. Because the study was interested in how investigating situations of media engagings can be a useful method for exploring gender, the primary unit of analysis was the interviewee as he or she faced that particular cross-section of time and space. In other words, the interviewee-in-situation was the level within which men's and women's sense-making instances were compared. Then the sense-making instances are the variables in which interviewees may vary between each other and with themselves in different situations. This unit of analysis reflects SMM's conceptualization of the fluid human being who may change across time and space in small or dramatic ways (Dervin, 2008; Dervin & Foreman-Wernet, 2003).

There were 22 women and 21 men, or 43 interviewees in total. Each interviewee had four Gendered Media Engaging Situations that constituted their interviews. In total, there were 172 situations, or interviewee-in-situation, to be analyzed. Within each situation, the same series of SMM questions were asked; specific questions related to specific sense-making instances, for which specific coding schemes were developed. All codes were applied to the specified locations dichotomously. This means if the code was judged to be present in the interviewee's discussion, then the code received a "yes" or "1". If the code was not judged to be present in what the interviewee said, then the code received a "no" or "0". The sense-making instances, what SMM question the code was applied to, how many

codes for that scheme, and how many codes are possible per situation are all laid out in Table 3.1, and this information will be repeated for each results chapter.

Analysis consisted of comparing men and women on the level of each code. That is, for each coding scheme, men and women were compared for how frequently either mentioned a particular code within each of the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. Divergings were found if one gender mentioned the code more than the other at some predetermined level of significance. Tests of statistical significance, in the form of one-way analysis of variance, and illustrative or magnitude significance were the primary means of comparison. Instead of comparing direct frequency numbers, the presence of the codes were converted into percentages, indicating to what extent the given code was present across all the possible situations. This allowed for comparison across the uneven numbers of men and women in the study.

Each sense-making instance is represented in a specific results chapter, outlined below, using the same layout. First, the qualitative codes were discussed for two reasons: to show how the codes were developed using the interviewees' own words; and, to compare these comments within each code as developed for each sense-making instance. The qualitative comparisons were undertaken within each situation, and any pattern of across situation is noted.

After the qualitative section, each chapter contains a quantitative section. Here tests of statistical and illustrative significance were conducted to compare men and women on each code for each sense-making instance within each of the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. The results of these tests were depicted in summary charts for each coding scheme. While the primary method of analysis was qualitative, the charts were utilized to show in graph form what cannot be shown in the quotes; primarily, a direct test of significant difference between men and women within each situation for each code for each sense-making instance. The quotes and the percentages were used to strengthen each other in the study's discussion of gender divergings and convergings.

Thus, this document contains six chapters of results, followed by a chapter summarizing the sense-making instance results, and ends with a chapter on conclusions for the entire study. Only Chapter 4 varies from the other five results

chapters in that it a) is not about a sense-making instance and b) contains at the end of the chapter a summary discussion that analyzes the results across situations. For the sense-making instances, the analysis across situations occurs in Chapter 10.

- Chapter 4: Selecting Gendered Media Products. What were the media products chosen to be discussed in each of the Gendered Media Engaging Situations?

- Chapter 5: Explaining Media Products as Gendered. What were the interpretive strategies employed by the interviewees to explain their choices for what is meant for men versus what is meant for women?

- Chapter 6: Reasons for Engaging. Focusing on two sense-making instances, what led the interviewee to engage with the gendered media product for the first or only time, and how volitional was this engaging?

- Chapter 7: Why Stopped or Continued Engaging. What led the interviewee to say which media products were used only once versus those that were used repeatedly?

- Chapter 8: How Engaging Helped. How did the interviewee see the engaging with the gendered media product as being helpful in his or her life?

- Chapter 9: How Saw Gender. If gender is partly an interpretive act, how did the interviewee see the balance between what is appropriate for men versus what is appropriate for women during the engaging with a gendered media product?

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS:
SELECTING GENDERED MEDIA PRODUCTS

<u>Research question</u>

How do men and women diverge and converge on the media products chosen for the four parts of the interview?

<u>Gendered Media Products</u>

The purpose of this coding scheme was to reflect a common measurement of media use: how often is a media product selected and by whom? This first scheme reflects a measure of selectings. While it was developed using a grounded approach, its creation was unique compared to the other schemes in that it focused on *whats*. What media product was chosen to be discussed in what situation? Here the scheme only focused on the nature of the media products listed in the Life-Line section of the interview, and not in how or why the individual's interpretation of them mattered.

To categorize the media products experienced, the first step consisted of grouping media products by "same-name". "Same-name" implies that the same words were used to label the media product. The point of categorizing by "same-name" was to stay as close as possible to the labeling used by the participants. Hence some media products that might otherwise be collapsed together, such as romantic movies and chick flicks, remained separate to preserve the distinctions made by the participants.

Next, to further reduce categories, media products were grouped by their defining genre characteristic. Media products I was not familiar with were researched on imdb.com, amazon.com and wikipedia.org to verify what genre defined it. If a media product could be defined with multiple genres, such as romantic comedy, then the genre commonly placed first in the definitional label was used for categorization. Hence romantic comedy would be placed with romances, not comedies. Overarching genres became the main categories for which the codes were applied. The majority of main categories are of a specific genre; however, three categories are specific types of media technology that were given their own category because of the different genres unique to that particular technology: Music; Games; Personal Computers. For the majority of the media products, my judgment was singular in determining the code. However, there were instances where the interviewee mentioned both a specific title and a genre that conflicted with my interpretation of that specific title. In these cases, to remain faithful to the interpretive stance of the individual, his or her genre label was used in coding.

The coding scheme resulted in 18 main categories used to compare men and women within each of the four types of Gendered Media Engaging Situations. Only one code, or genre category, was applied to each situation. Each of those categories is discussed below, with examples of media products discussed by men and women for each of the situations. Where possible, all media products classified as part of that category are included; examples are used only in those instances where the frequency of that particular code exceeds what is reportable here. Following this qualitative discussion of the codes, a quantitative discussion focuses on the comparison of men and women within each of the Gendered Media Engaging Situations for each of the codes. Comparisons are deemed divergent based on the results of statistical and illustrative tests, as detailed below.

Action/Adventure.

A media product was coded as being *Action/Adventure* if the overriding characteristic of the product dealt with some level of violence, fighting, adventuring, or similar content, typically involving conflict between heroes and villains and set in

some distant settings. Different time eras, if significantly different from the era in which the media product was created, were coded into different categories, such as Historical and Science Fiction & Fantasy. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Media products that could be classified as Action/Adventure were only chosen to be discussed in the two Meant for Men situations. Discussed as Used Once, Lily choose "Action movies, In the Line of Fire", a movie about presidential assassination attempts. Discussed as Used Repeatedly, both men and women choose items to discuss. For example, Barbara choose "Lost", a television serial about survivors on a strange island, while Eileen spoke about the "Rambo movies" her father would watch. Representing the men, Chad decided to talk about "Digimon", a Japanese anime similar to *Pokémon*, while Elliot spoke about his time spent reading "Superhero comic books, both Marvel and DC".

Advertisements.

A media product was coded as being *Advertisements* if the overriding characteristic of the product focused on selling some other product. Advertisements and marketing campaigns had to be separated from people's recollections of the consumer good that were being sold, such as toys, hygiene products, food stuffs, etc. If the person could recall the actual marketing campaign or advertisement released through some media to sell such goods, then those recollections were included. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Media products that could be coded as advertisements were chosen to be discussed only in the Meant for Men situations. As seen in the below chart, there were only three situations that focused on discussing experiences with advertisements. Sam chose to discuss "College admissions material", focusing on the brochures and booklets for various colleges, as something he Used Once. Then, for something he Used Repeatedly, he discussed "High-end advertising", focusing on liquor advertisements. The only woman to pick some advertisement to discuss,

Lana, focused on her experience with the "Hot Topics website", a fashion store's website, as a media product she has Used Repeatedly.

Children's.

A media product was coded as being *Children's* if the overriding characteristic of the product indicated it was primarily meant for a young audience, and there was no other generic characteristic that could be attached to it, such as action, historical or guidance. Thus an action-based cartoon such as *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* would be classified under Action/Adventure and not as Children's. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

The majority of media products that could be classified as Children's were discussed as Meant for Women, with only one exception. Jamie, for her Meant for Men Used Repeatedly situation, chose to discuss "Barney", an educational, sing-along program hosted by a dinosaur.

As something Meant For Women Used Once, only men chose to discuss Children's products. Such as Franklin, who recalled his experience watching "My Little Pony**,** girlie cartoons", a television series about brightly colored horses. Also there was Isaac, focusing on similar cartoons with "Strawberry Shortcake, My Little Pony", the first being a television series about a girl and her friends.

On the other hand, as something Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, both men and women choose to discuss media products classifiable as Children's. For the men, Ralph discussed watching "Olsen twin movies" with his girlfriend, while Ted recalled his affection for "Beauty and the Beast, other Disney cartoons". The women focused on Disney cartoons, recalling them with affection shared by Ted, such as Sally with "Disney movies – the princess series" and Nicole focusing on "Disney movies – The Little Mermaid".

<u>Comedy</u>.

A media product was listed as being *Comedy* if the overriding characteristic of the product was intended to produce a humorous response in the audience, regardless of the type of comedy being shown. The only animated comedies included in this list consisted of those produced for primetime television – cartoons produced specifically for children were classified as *Children's*. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Media products classifiable as Comedy occurred across all four of the situations, although with a higher concentration in the Meant for Women situations, as seen in the figure below. As something Meant for Men Used Once, Abby discussed watching with her boyfriend "The Man Show", a former comedy show on Comedy Central, while Vance focused on his experience watching "Animal House – drinking" with his father. As something Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, only Gerald discussed his fondness during high school for "Monty Python", with a focus on the group's movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.

However, it was the mentions as Meant for Women that were the most interesting. In fact, all the mentions were of the same show, *Sex and the City*, except for one. As something Used Once, Xavier discussed a time he and his homosexual friends watched "Margaret Cho comedy", which was the comedian's standup act about homosexuality. The remaining two mentions by men in this situation were of *Sex and the City*. However, as something Used Repeatedly, three men discussed this same show. This curious finding is further highlighted by the fact that no women discussed their experiences watching this show.

<u>Drama</u>.

A media product was coded as being *Drama* if the overriding characteristic of the product focused on some form of drama or conflict, from relationship to crime, and there was no other primary generic convention, such as action (which included any depiction of violence), historical, or romance, that could supersede and inform the formula of the content. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with

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which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

As seen in the figure below, media products classifiable as Drama were only discussed in the Meant for Women situations. While men did discuss experiences with these media products, they were outnumbered by women choosing to discuss Drama. As something Used Once, Barbara chose to talk about "Lipstick Jungle", a television series about women finding love and sex in New York City. Carla represents the women who chose to talk about soap operas when she discussed "Soap operas – Days of Our Lives."

No men chose to talk about soap operas. They did speak about other Drama products, such as Henry discussing watching "Oxygen: random movie". Likewise, Barclay focused on "Lifetime Channel – I will watch it with my mother, but never use it myself". Although Barclay did actually talk about watching the comedy *Golden Girls*, the overarching media product mentioned was Lifetime Channel, which is overwhelmingly drama-oriented.

The media products discussed as Used Repeatedly were more varied, and as seen in the figure below, saw a closing of the gap between men and women in the frequency of discussing these media products. Soap operas were still represented with Gloria and "Soap operas, General Hospital", but so were primetime melodramas, with Paige and "Desperate Housewives" and Vance "Grey's Anatomy". Finally, overall drama cable networks were likewise indicated with Sam and "Bravo Network".

Games

A media product was labeled as a *Game* if the product allowed the individual to control the outcome of the content through interacting with, or playing, the product. Products considered as *Games* may be electronic or not, from a variety of genres. What is first striking is that board games and role-playing games were not asked for, as only video and computer games were listed as potential media products in the interview's instructions. The fact that they were voluntarily mentioned by several people indicates a potentially different way of conceptualizing

such leisure activities. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Video games were the most frequently mentioned Games media product, and this subgroup were most frequently mentioned as Meant for Men. But the inclusion of other types of Games meant that the discussion of these experiences was spread out over all four situations. Focusing on those media products discussed as Meant for Men, men and women were equal in discussing something Used Once. Both Ben and Carla discussed one of the *Grand Theft Auto* games, from a line of series focused on playing as a criminal in a fictional city. Gina discussed a similar style game, "Shooting video games – Doom", while Gerald also mentioned a violent video game in "God of War." However, Henry discussed his experience only playing the role-playing game "Dungeons & Dragons" one time.

While Henry was the only deviation from the focus on video games, there were more when discussing something Used Repeatedly. Franklin also discussed playing "Dungeons & Dragons", while Ted discussed playing "RISK, board game". The remaining discussions were focused on video games, such as Deanna and "Mortal Kombat – Sega game" and Ralph with "video games – football, Madden". As with being Used Once, there were no substantial differences between how much women mentioned playing such games when compared to men.

However, this lack of difference was not the case in Meant for Women Used Once. In this situation, only women discussed having an experience with some form of Game. There was Abby and her recollection of playing the "Mall Madness board game", a game about shopping, and there was Lana, who discussed playing a "Paper doll dress up, internet game" about fashion design. While these are games, the content matter of the games on fashion and shopping differ from the content of those games discussed as Meant for Men. In those two situations, the content was focused on violence or competition of some sort.

This differentiation in content can be seen in the only mention of a Game as Meant for Women Used Repeatedly. However, instead of being a woman who played the game, it was a man. Jeremy, who has worked as a computer technician,

recalled playing the game "Sims". The design of this computer game allows players to create and control some aspect of reality, such as the daily lives of characters they created. The design does not require some form of violence or competition to play, similar to those games mentioned in Meant for Women Used Once.

Guidance.

A media product was labeled as *Guidance* if the overriding characteristic or purpose of the product was to supply information to the individual that could be used to improve some facet of his or her life, such as home improvement, cooking, fitness, fashion, and so forth. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

As seen in the figure below, while the majority of classifiable media products occurred as Meant for Women, few were mentioned by men as Meant for Men Used Once. Jeremy discussed reading "GQ magazine", a men's fashion and lifestyle magazine, while Leo mentioned the encounter he had with "Boy-magazines, I think one was called Boys' Life", a magazine distributed by the Boy Scouts of America. Both of these Guidance products have content that are specifically targeted to a male audience.

This is contrasted with the content of the media products mentioned for Meant for Women. Some of these products do have content specifically targeted to feminine concerns, such as female fashion and heterosexual dating tips. Others have content that could be more universal but have traditionally been seen as feminine. However, as seen in the figure below, discussion of these media products was similar across men and women for both of these situations. As something Used Once, Ralph discussed leafing through a "Fitness magazine", where the exercise tips were formulated for women's physique, while Deanna discussed an encounter with "Bop! Magazine", focusing on the dating tips aspect of it. General women's interest magazines, those that have dating and fashion tips as well as other stories, were mentioned by men and women. Kendra recalled an encounter with "Cosmopolitan, teen magazine" that, while different, was also the media product that

served as the basis of a recollection by Leo, "Again, my sisters' magazines, Cosmopolitan and Seventeen".

In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, women continued to discuss engaging with media products whose content provided tips on fashion and dating, while more men focused on getting tips for cooking. Tammy with her "Teen girl magazines" and Penny with "Cosmopolitan" represent those women who routinely engaged with Guidance media products. Oliver discussed engaging with the "Joy of Cooking, book" while Henry said he enjoyed watching the "Food Network: Good Eats, Secret Life of…". While both men had experiences with similar types of Guidance products, subsequent analysis of the sense-making instance of their engaging with their products showed the differences in how and why they engaged with them.

Historical.

A media product was labeled as *Historical* if the overriding aspect of the product dealt with the details of some historical period, and if no other generic characteristic could be said as more fundamental in how the product is received or understood by those using it. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Media products classifiable as Historical were seldom discussed. Those discussed had content classifiable as cowboy or war. As something Meant for Men Used Once, Zane discussed the war movie "Apocalypse Now" as a movie he watched, and Barbara recalled "Old cowboy movies – John Wayne" as something her father would watch. This pattern reverses when the media product was something Used Repeatedly. Gloria saw "War media: Band of Brothers" as Meant for Men but she focused on her use of it. On the other side, Gerald saw "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman" as Meant for Women, but he focused on how his sisters would watch it.

<u>Horror</u>.

A media product was labeled as *Horror* if the content was intended to produce a sense of fear, dread, disgust or other negative affective state in the individual, regardless of type of content or audience for which it was intended. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Only three people discussed media products classifiable as Horror, and all were seen as being Meant for Men. Only one women, Lily, discussed a Horror media product as Used Repeatedly when she recalled watching "Scary movies, like Scream, Saw I, II". On the other hand, it was two men who discussed watching scary movies as something Used Once. They mentioned similar films, with Oliver discussing "Slasher films, Halloween, Friday 13th" (Oliver), while Franklin mentioned having watched the classic "Slasher movies, horror/gore films", of which *Friday the 13th* would be included.

<u>Music</u>.

A media product was labeled as *Music* if it was either a) a musician or band or b) some other product or technology with a focus on music, such as magazines and CDs. Musicians and bands were divided by their characteristic genre of music, such as rap, pop or rock-n-roll. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Experiences with Music media products did occur across all situations. First, the various mentions shows the range of types of music discussed in the interviews. As Meant for Men Used Once, Adam recalled, with contempt and critique, music such as "Sum-41 type rock & roll". As Meant for Women Used Once, Yuri was more amenable towards "Norah Jones music" while Becky was dismissive of pop music in general with her recollection of "Buy some CDs, just a few. Not into music if it's not for rehearsal". In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, Ben was unabashed in his experience listening to the "Backstreet Boys".

As seen in the figure below, what is curious is how these discussions were clustered as Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, and how it was men discussing them more in that situation. Those experiences were largely with some form of rock-and-roll music, from alternative to heavy metal. Vance discussed his devotion to "Dave Matthew's Band," Zane and his high school listening to "Grunge rock", while Xavier recalled going to "Metal concerts, Ozzfest" with his father. Compared to these men, it was only Carla who recalled a similar high school obsession with "Metal music (Black Sabbath, Fear Factory)". As with Games media products, Music media products can be segmented more into genre, where pop music appears more meant for women and rock-and-roll is seen as meant for men.

Musicals.

A media product was labeled as being *Musical* if the overriding characteristic of the product was the focus on and/or incorporation of song and dance sequences into the plotline of the movie, television show or theatre production. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

As seen in the figure below, media products classifiable as media products were only discussed in the Meant for Women Used Repeatedly situation. Although not substantially different, it is noteworthy that two men discussed engaging with a Musical while only one woman did. Lily recalled the overall positive experience watching "Musicals – Les Misérables". Both Isaac, discussing "Musicals – Grease," and Leo with "Oklahoma, South Pacific, etc." were similar in being dismissive of their Musicals, neither saying the repeated encounter was overwhelmingly negative or positive.

Personal Computers.

Any media product was coded as being about *Personal Computers* if it made a direct reference to using computers, to any internet site, or some other media product that focused on computers as their primary subject. Summary Chart 4.1

below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

As with Musicals, this media product was only found in the Meant for Women Used Repeatedly situations. Instead of being about computer hardware, these experiences were with websites. For the men, only Dean recalled an experience with "Fabric websites, fashion websites". Becky recalled using "Online dating sites" during a lonely period in her life, while Alice reported an "addiction" to "fanfiction" that could be obtained through online sites.

Reality.

A media product was labeled as *Reality* if the intent of the product is to display some aspect of life as it naturally occurs, from documentary and news forms to game shows and other competition shows. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

As seen in the figure below, media products classifiable as Reality could be found across all four situations. However, in a reverse of the pattern found for Music, the majority of these media products were found in the Meant for Women situations, where more women than men discussed experiences with such products. As something Meant for Men Used Once, Penny discussed the MTV stunt show "Jackass" while Xavier recalled seeing the news coverage of "Hilary Clinton drinking". As something Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, it was Adam who discussed his affection for the "Reality shows – Flavor of Love, Bret Michael's Rock of Love, anything on VH-1".

Looking at the media products discussed as Meant for Women Used Once, a similar variety were found. Oliver discussed his contempt for "Dr. Phil" while Adam was similarly annoyed with the program "The Hills". However, even women were not pleased with their Reality experiences. Especially Eileen and Paige, who had different experiences but similar reactions to the "Reality shows Bachelor, Bachelorette".

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When it was something Used Repeatedly, only one man discussed an experience with a Reality product. Elliot recalled watching with his wife "Home improvement/personal makeover reality shows". Elliot's media product was coded here because he directly called them "reality shows". Deanna reported watching a fashion competition show with her family and roommates "America's Next Top Model". While Adam was annoyed with "The Hills", Megan and Eileen were just as adamant about their adoration for the show.

Romance.

A media product was labeled as *Romance* if the overriding characteristic of that product was focused on a love story, whether with a tragic ending (i.e. drama) or a happy ending (i.e. comedy). Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

As seen in the figure below, media products classifiable as Romances were only discussed in Meant for Women situations. Intriguingly, men and women were rather equal in how often they chose to discuss such products, whether it was something used only once or multiple times. The same types of Romances were mentioned in both types of situations. As something Used Once, Zane was disgruntled with "Love, Actually", Tammy disliked "Jane Austen novels" and Kaitlin was dismayed by "Romance novels – Romeo & Juliet". Of them all, only Ted recalled fondly something he used only once, a "Girls' manga, Angelic Layer". When it came to media products Used Repeatedly, Carla was effulgent about "Romantic comedies – Legally Blonde" and Kaitlin recalled fondly "Movies like Princess's Diary, Prince & Me." However, even men were warm to their experiences with Romance products, such as Chad and "Romantic dramedies, such as Maid in America and Notting Hill", and Franklin with "Shojo Manga, Absolute Boyfriend".

Science Fiction & Fantasy.

A media product was labeled as *Science Fiction & Fantasy* if the overarching characteristic of the product focused on portraying some fantastical aspect of life,

from futuristic science, technology and societies to fairytale creatures and locations. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

As seen in the figure below, media products classifiable as Science Fiction & Fantasy were only discussed in the being Meant for Men situations, and the majority of those were Used Repeatedly. Only one woman, Alice, discussed a media product Used Once, recalling her short time reading "Science fiction novels". Interestingly, more women than men decided to discuss their experiences with these products. This would include Becky, who enthusiastically recalled "Stargate SG1 premieres, my life is complete," a television series based on a B-movie. Penny focused on reading "Fantasy novels – Lord of the Rings", the entire series of classic fantasy novels. Representing the men, Isaac recalled "Scifi movies, Star Wars" and Jeremy discussed "Star Trek", the two most well-known science fiction fandoms in the United States.

Science & Technology.

A media product was labeled as *Science & Technology* if the main subject of the media product, from a television show to a magazine, is some type of science or technology, from astronomy to zoology, and from cars to weaponry. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Only two people discussed a media product that could be classified as Science & Technology, and both of these were as Meant for Men. As something used Once, Sally discussed the time she used "Car magazines", while Dean discussed the same media product as something Used Repeatedly. Although they discussed the same media product, their engagings were different, as Sally used the product once while looking for a car and Dean has used it repeatedly as part of his life. The purpose of further results chapters is to breakdown why engagings with the same product are different.

Sex.

        A media product was labeled as *Sex* if the overarching characteristic of the product was the prominence given to displaying or implicating sexual intercourse – from directly showing sex in pornography to indirectly implying sex in certain magazines. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

        As with other media product categories, experiences with Sex were rarely discussed and only as being Meant for Men Used Once. However, as seen in the figure below, more women discussed such experiences. Deanna spoke about an occasion to leaf through the magazine "Maxim" while Isabel discussed watching "Cat House – HBO documentaries", a series of documentaries about a brothel. Only Isaac discussed the time he went to his friend's house and encountered "some form of pornography."

Sports.

        A media product was labeled as *Sports* if the subject of the product, from film to magazine, was the portrayal of some organized and/or competitive athletic event, such as wrestling, football, basketball or baseball. This portrayal could be factual, such as a sports broadcast or news show, or fictional, as long as the plot of the story centered on playing a sport. Summary Chart 4.1 below quantifies the frequency with which these media products occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

        As can be seen in the figure below, the largest concentration of media products classifiable as Sports could be found in the Meant for Men situations. There was only one man who discussed a Sports product as Meant for Women Used Repeatedly: Barclay with "Women's basketball on TV". For the two Meant for Men situations, a something used only once, men and women were rather equal in their discussions, from Barclay and "Friday Night Lights, movie version", and Chad and "football", to Eileen and "Basketball", and Jeanne with "World Wrestling Federation".

The array of media products discussed as Used Repeatedly are even more varied. Barclay again recalled watching a sports movie, "Coach Carter". Yuri discussed his fondness of watching the "NCAA basketball tournament". The women discussed an array of different types of sports, such as Tammy with "Golf broadcasts", Kaitlin and "Sports soccer, cricket, formula one, golf", and Nicole with "Football, basketball sports". Jeanne was unique with her watching "ESPN". But overall, as seen below, more women than men choose to discuss an experience with Sports as something Meant for Men Used Repeatedly.
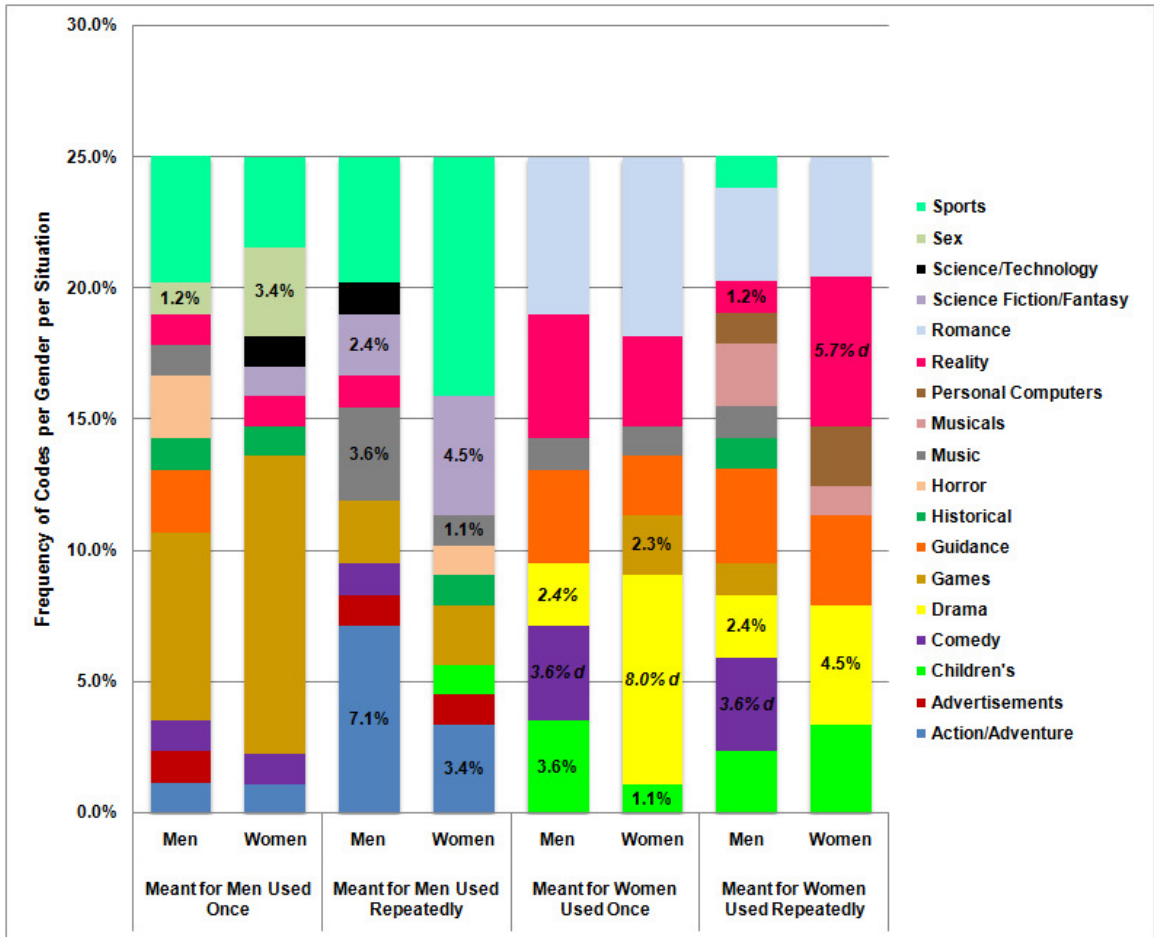
Summary Chart

There are 18 categories of Gendered Media Products and four Gendered Media Engaging Situations in which to compare men and women within each of the four situations. This results in a total of 72 locations in which there may be convergings and divergings. These locations have been plotted for men and women in the summary chart below. In this chart, each code is a specific color. Percentages are given only for those comparisons deemed to be divergent.

Within each situation, men and women were compared for how often they mentioned a media product that could be recorded as that specific code. This comparison happened in two ways. First, one-way analyses of variance (degrees of freedom 1, 42) were calculated for each code. Given the small sample size, any difference significant at $p<0.10$ or less was considered a diverging. The size of the significance was indicated as follows: a = $p<.001$; b = $p<.01$; c = $p<.05$; d = $p<.10$.

Second, the illustrations in the summary chart were examined to find additional divergings that occurred but did not reach statistical significance due to the sample size. An illustrative difference was considered a diverging if the magnitude of one code's frequency was approximately twice that of the other or more. If there was no mention by one gender, then the other had to be at least 2%, indicating at least two separate people mentioned that code.

There are locations when either the men or the women reported a solitary mention of a code. Given the sample size, it is hard to determine if this is a pattern that may result in a diverging or a converging. As such, these discrepancies will not

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be included as divergings. Statistical and illustrative divergings are indicated in the summary chart as the only ones to have their corresponding percentages displayed.

Summary Chart 4.1. Gendered Media Products Discussed

Statistical. Analysis of the one-way ANOVA results indicated 4 divergings that met the criteria for significant difference listed above. Those divergings are demarcated by bold, italicized percentages in the summary chart to more efficiently demonstrate these differences. Thus, there were 5.6% of the total locations that showed a significant difference between men and women in discussing why the media product they chose was gendered. In Meant for Women Used Once, more men decided to discuss comedies, again largely *Sex and the City*, (F = 3.496, p<.10), while more women discussed dramas, largely soap operas (F = 3.326,

p<.10). In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, again more men decided to talk about their experiences with *Sex and the City* as comedies (F = 3.496, p<.10), while more women spoke about reality programs (F = 2.952, p<.10).

    Illustrative. Across all 72 locations, there were a total of 9 divergings meeting the criteria listed above. Thus, there were 12.5% divergings in what media products men and women said were meant for men or women and used once or repeatedly.

    For half the divergings, the frequency count indicated more men who choose to discuss the following media products than women: Guidance and Horror in Meant for Men Used Once; Action/Adventure and Music in Meant for Men Used Repeatedly; and, Children's in Meant for Women Used Once.

    For the other half, the frequency count indicated women choose to discuss the following media products more than men: Sex in Meant for Men Used Once; Science Fiction & Fantasy and Sports in Meant for Men Used Repeatedly; Games in Meant for Women Used Once; and, Drama in Meant for Women Used Repeatedly.

    Divergings versus Convergings. Combining the statistical and illustrative divergings results in 18.1% of the total locations showing differences which gendered media products men and women choose to discuss in the interview for each of the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. This means that 81.9% of the locations showed convergings. However, 24 of the convergings occurred because neither men nor women mentioned a media product that could be coded in that genre or type. Removing these convergings from the calculation results in 48.6% of the convergings being due to men and women both choosing to discuss a media product that could be classified the same within any given situation. Thus, for the most part, men and women were alike in how they discussed their experiences with Sports and Games as meant for men, while Romance and Guidance were meant for women.

Stereotypical Expectations

    Given that past studies have indicated men and women engaged with different media products in different amounts, and assuming that all the interviewees are average representatives of modern media consumers from the United States, it

is not terribly surprising that their selection of media products aligns with the gender stereotypes involved in this question. For the gender stereotype to be seen in the gendered interpretive stance of the interviewees, then their selection of what media products are meant for each gender had to coincide with what has been previously found. In many regards, this stereotyping was seen in the clustering of what types of media products were seen as directed to either gender and how often they were used. Where the stereotypes begin to breakdown is in which engaging with a gendered media products each interviewee picked to discuss.

The category of Games, with is major focus being on computer and video games, reflected the stereotype that such products are overall meant for men more than women. However, men and women recalled relatively equal experiences with such products, and women mentioned more engagings when the media product was seen as meant for women. There were only two women who mentioned playing a game in Meant for Women Used Once, and only one of these was a computer game. Additionally, most of the equal recollection during the meant for men situations occurred when women said the experience was a onetime encounter; however, some of those women who said it was a onetime encounter discussed the desire to play it more.

The category of Guidance was overall seen as meant for women due to a large number of women's general interest magazines and cooking related products being mentioned, and only men discussed such a product as Meant for Men Used Once when it was a general interest magazine for men or boys. Given the specificity of these products, the overall finding aligns with stereotypical expectations. However, women's guidance products were discussed with relatively equal frequency by men and women across the meant for women situations. General interest products feature tips geared to specific genders, but the tips are similar, such as dating, career, fashion, and health. Traditionally, such magazines have been the domain for women, as women were the homemakers, those concerned with appearance, and other stereotypes. Men indicated using these products to learn more about women, which would be expected, but that using the cooking products were to learn more how to cook for themselves. These nuances were

discerned through the analysis of their interviews, revealing counter-stereotypical engagings not foreseeable with just this measurement of selectings.

Media products categorized as Reality were overall more seen as meant for women due to the focus on dating and fashion shows. When it was a media product used repeatedly, this stereotype appeared as more women than men recalled experiences with such products. However, when it was Meant for Women Used Once, men and women were relatively equal in their recollections of such engagings. While for men such engagings would be stereotypically expected, the fact that so many women also matched their recollections indicates women reactively negatively to something seemingly targeted to them.

The category of Romance has a long tradition of being the domain and exemplar of femininity. Overall, both men and women discussed these products more as meant for women, reflecting this stereotype. However, in both of the situations, they discussed experiences with romances in relatively equal amounts. Given the stereotype, we would expect men to say they perhaps saw a romantic product once but not again; but many likewise said such a product was something they repeatedly returned to. Further examination of these situations identifies how many repeated exposures were due to their desire to spend time with the women in their lives. However, as with the Guidance category, such nuances are not obtainable at this level of analysis.

The common conception of the fan of the media products in the category Science Fiction & Fantasy is a socially inept man (Jenkins, 1992). This gender stereotype was found in the sample, with men and women saying these media products were more meant for men. However, more women than men discussed a repeated experience with such a product. Part of this explanation could be that the past decade of Science Fiction and Fantasy genre products have increasingly contained features to encourage cross-gendering by women; to the extent that heroines are increasingly female, without being overtly sexualized, and romance stories are interwoven into stories about aliens, monsters, and amazing powers. Another explanation, which could be used for all of these categories, is discussed below.

The conception of the male fan is just as traditionally associated with the Sports category (Gosling, 2007). Media products coded as Sports were overwhelmingly seen as something meant for men. However, as with the previous category, more women than men discuss recalling such media products as something repeatedly engaged with, while both mentioned such recollections relatively equally when encountered only once. As with Science Fiction & Fantasy, this finding could be explained by the increasing cross-gendering occurring with sports participation, to the point where the National Football League is promoting a line of fan merchandise specifically made for women to wear (McCarthy, 2006). However, another explanation can also be just as applicable, and is discussed below.

Of course, there were times when the overall assignment of media products and the within situation recollections did match, and then both met stereotypical expectations. Both men and women saw the category Drama as meant more for women, because of more women discussing their recollections about primetime and daytime soap operas. Overall, the category Children's was seen as meant for women, because of Disney princess series and other girly cartoons; and this placement was replicated by more women in Used Repeatedly and more men in Used Once, both of which would be expected given the types of Children's programming recalled. Men and women agreed that Action/Adventure media products were more meant for men, and the interviewees agreed in what they recalled for their situations. More men recalled having repeated experiences with such products than women. Likewise, media products coded as Sex were interpreted as being meant for men, and more women reported using such products only once, as would be expected given the tendency for such products to be pornographic in nature. The overall essence of Sex and Action/Adventure meant that they were seen for men. However, it was the particular nature of Drama and Children's products that apparently led them to be categorized as meant for women; otherwise, these overarching genre categories would not be expected to be stereotyped for one or the other gender.

The case of Children's is similar to the case of Comedy. Overall it was seen as meant for women, but only men discussed them, with the majority of those discussions revolving around *Sex and the City*. Adding to this finding is that three women did list that they had experiences with *Sex and the City* as something used repeatedly and meant for women, but none of those women chose to speak about it. As for men, only those men who spoke about the show had the show listed as something they had experienced. The probabilities say this is not a significant difference between men and women, but the significance is in the pattern: why would all the men who listed *Sex and the City* decide to speak about these experiences whereas none of the women?

Discussion

The question generated by the *Sex and the City* finding, as well as some of the cross-gendering results, seems to indicate that certain media products and genres are more polarized in who they are seen as meant for and are thus more interpreted as gendered. These findings may be an artifact of the interview. The interview asked men and women to recall engaging with products they saw as meant for men or women. Some men and women may have chosen more stereotyped things to discuss because those were the first or easiest to recall as they most align with what is expected for the different genders.

While this explanation could dismiss the material findings as simply the result of priming within the interview situation, other explanations can be found in the patterns. Focusing on the divergings and convergings reveals an examination of cross-gendering that reflects the current sociocultural environment of the United States.

For the divergings, cross-genderings in used only once experiences appear more in line with stereotypical assumptions in what men and women say they do not engage with often. Cross-genderings of used repeatedly appear to reflect media products that are increasingly attempting to reach out to both genders as their potential audiences. For convergings, most occurred because few or no media products were mentioned by either gender for that particular situation. For those

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occurring in larger numbers, most were with media products used only once. However, the converging for Romance, as something used repeatedly, had quite a number of mentions by both men and women; as mentioned above, in-depth analysis of those situations in subsequent chapters can reveal the reasons behind this finding.

For the most part, divergings were in directions and situations we would expect given stereotypical assumptions as to what media products men versus women should be using and how often they should be engaging with them. Given the sociocultural messages about what type of media a "true man" engages with – something violent, with sex, and no emotions -- we would expect men to repeatedly engage with media products commonly considered to have these "masculine features" like Action/Adventure and Game products. To be a "true woman", women are expected to engage with media products containing "feminine features" like nurturing and romanticism, such as are found in Romance and Children's products.

However, the occurrence of more convergings than divergings, and divergings in counter-stereotypical ways, indicates the possible waning of either the hegemonic messages or the acceptance of these messages by media users. The particularly striking results were found for Comedy, Guidance, Romance, Sports, and Science Fiction & Fantasy. All five have some form of gender stereotype associated with them, but the cross-gendering noted by the interviewees' experiences counters, challenges or in some way negotiates what these stereotypes mean to the person. I would argue these five categories have been undergoing the most change in how they are being presented to potential media users. Romances are now being made more for men – termed "bromances" – such as those from producer/director/writer Judd Apatow. Comedies, led by the seminal *Sex and the City,* now feature humorous sexual situations for both genders to appreciate. Guidance products are being promoted for men and women, with fashion becoming more important to men. As mentioned Sports are being actively marketed to women, and Science Fiction & Fantasy products increasingly contain features traditionally associated with femininity.

It is also true that of these cross-genderings, the divergings indicated more women than men engaging with these products. It appears traditionally male media products are being taken up more by women than are traditionally female media products being taken up by men. This could be an indication of what Staiger (2005) argued is the less likely cross-gender identification for men. Individuals in a dominant position – which would be men in the United States' society and mainstream culture – see less benefit in transgressing the boundary separating it from the minority position; downward transgressive identifying is less likely than upwards transgressive identifying. Thus women would be more willing to move from the minority position to gain the power of the dominant, but there is not a similar sociocultural incentive for men. There has been a long history of men being ridiculed and publically losing social status for engaging in behaviors deemed by other men to be less than masculine (Harris, 2007; Jhally, 1999; Lull, 1990). As will be discussed in subsequent chapters on the sense-making instance, this concern did occur more often among men than women in their engagings, and much more with media products seen as meant for women than those meant for men.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS:
EXPLAINING MEDIA PRODUCTS AS GENDERED

Research question

How do men and women diverge and converge on their explanations for why saw media products as gendered?

Why Gendered

The first sense-making instance being analyzed focused on measuring an interpreting, subset of decoding, from the first part of the discussion of the interviewee's recollection of the situation. Because I was not imposing my ideas as to what are media products meant for men versus meant for women, the first step for each situation was to solicit what led them to say that product was gendered. The questions were designed to elicit how the product was seen as gendered from three different angles: why meant for the gender for that situation; why not meant for the opposite gender of that situation; how might be attractive to the opposite gender of that situation. For each of these primary questions, follow-up questions were asked to have the individual compare their answers as to why gendered to what led them to consider the other items in that situation's column as being gendered.

For the analysis presented here, only the answers to the first two primary questions – why meant for that gender, why not meant for the other gendered – were considered. The answers to the follow-up questions were considered if the answer directly referred to how the chosen media product was seen as gendered. Each

answer could be coded more than once with a different code if there appeared to be unique interpretive strategies for why the media product was seen as gendered. Due to the possibility that each Gendered Media Engaging Situation could have multiples codes for this sense-making instance, the qualitative examples given may reflect these overlaps. Where necessary, such overlaps are highlighted to avoid confusion as to how the example reflects a given code.

What follows is a discussion of what each code means for this particular sense-making instance, with examples given to illustrate how this code manifested for both men and women within the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. The seven codes reflect the interpretive strategies used by interviewees to explain why the media products they chose to speak about were seen as gendered. These strategies represent how such conclusions were generated, and not what the conclusions were.

After the quotes are given to illustrate each code, any pattern or singular finding will be highlighted and briefly discussed. After the discussion of the qualitative examples, statistical and illustrative tests are reported to highlight where men and women converge and diverge in their frequency of mentioning a particular code within a particular situation. Summary Chart 5.1 illustrates this comparison. Any discussion of comparing across situations is minimal during the qualitative section as the topic is the focus for Chapter 10.

Seeing Others

The first code in the scheme focused on the interviewees explaining that they determined which gender the media product was meant for by looking around and seeing who was doing what in regards to it. That is, men and women indicated they saw other men and women behaving in different ways those products ultimately interpreted as meant for men compared to those meant for women. What these different behaviors were are not as important here as the overall interpretive strategy of looking around and seeing others as an explanatory factor. However, what was very apparent is that the interpretive strategy was based on the basic difference that

men are seen as engaging with those products meant for them, but not with those meant for women, and women do the exact opposite.

For the two Meant for Men situations, the difference came down to men do it and women don't. Men and women agreed on where this divide is. Across both the Used Once and Used Repeatedly situations, men and women said that they have seen men engage with these media products.

<table>
<tr><td>Used Once</td><td>Used Repeatedly</td></tr>
<tr><td>"That and my roommates, who were all males at the time, watched it, and I never knew any women that watched it."
   --Isabel, Cat House documentary</td><td>"And it's mainly a male audience from my direct experience."
   --Carla, metal music</td></tr>
<tr><td>"Because when I went in there, all I saw were guys in there, when I went to the theatre that time. There were very few like couples or girls on their own in that theatre when I went to go see it. And also the things was afterwards, whenever these new Friday the 13ths come out, I heard more and more guys talking about that than I did girls."
   --Oliver, Friday the 13th</td><td>"The only bond I shared with my father was attending concerts."
   --Xavier, metal music</td></tr>
</table>

For the same situations, men and women agreed that they were less likely to see women engaging with these media products, at least not to the same degree or intensity as the men.

<table>
<tr><td>Used Once</td><td>Used Repeatedly</td></tr>
<tr><td>"I don't know any females that really love cowboy movies. I mean, that would be cool if there was, but I don't know any females that love cowboy movies."
   --Barbara, cowboy movies</td><td>"In my experiences, like whenever I'm around a group of guys we watch ESPN, if I'm with a group of girls we don't. And I think guys like sports more, especially I think watching sports, I wouldn't necessarily say playing sports… I don't know a ton of girls that want to watch football all day whereas a lot of guys that I know live for that."
   --Jeanne, ESPN</td></tr>
<tr><td>"I've only ever discussed the movie with one other woman."
   --Zane, Apocalypse Now</td><td>"Because my girlfriend, that's where it call comes from, she hates Flavor of Love, hates it! … At least my girl, she hates it because it depicts</td></tr>
</table>

women in a negative way, or maybe it's because the type of girls that are there she doesn't like that type of girl, she considers them to be like beneath her or whatever..."
   --Adam, *Flavor of Love & Rock of Love*

For the two Meant for Women situations, the difference was quite understandably the reverse of the previous situations. For both the Used Once and Used Repeatedly situations, men and women agreed that engaging with these media products Meant for Women is something they have only seen women commonly do.

<u>Used Once</u>

"Romance novels is something I have seen girls reading more."
   --Kaitlin, *Romeo & Juliet*

"I also hear more women talk about Dr. Phil than I do men."
   --Oliver, Dr. Phil

<u>Used Repeatedly</u>

"My friends were so involved in this movie, the whole idea of the prince coming from the Denmark, and then that girl becomes a princess after she gets married to him, that whole idea involves girls of my group age so much that I was really amazed those girls expect those fairytale things to happen in their lives."
   --Kaitlin, *The Prince and Me*

"My mom and sister watch it every time I go home and we're together. … We always have little social events on Thursdays, and sometimes we say ten o'clock, girls are going to come, and we're like no they're not going to come until 10:30 just because this show's on. I think all girls really watch this show…"
   --Vance, *Grey's Anatomy*

The reverse was also found, and men and women agreed that they did not commonly see men engaging with these media products, without issues involved in their consumption of it.

<u>Used Once</u>

"As usual, like none of my guy siblings show interest in the show, so that kinda gave me an answer."
   --Eileen, *Bachelor/Bachelorette*

<u>Used Repeatedly</u>

"Any guys that I've ever watched it with have rolled their eyes and made fun of it the entire time."
   --Deanna, *America's Next Top Model*

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"I don't really see too many men reading it, openly at least."
  --Sam, Cosmopolitan

"I don't see myself sitting down with a bunch of dudes watching or participating in any of these activities or watching any of these shows together."
  --Xavier, *Sex and the City*

Thus, across the situations, assumptions that men engage with what is meant for them and women engage with what is meant for them informed those individuals who employed the interpretive strategy of seeing what those around them were doing.

What cannot be easily discerned is causality; did the interviewees determine who the media product was meant for based on what people were doing, or did they only remember those people who were engaging with media products the interviewee believed they should because of how gendered the media product was seen. Regardless of causality, from the interpretive stance of the interviewee, they were relating gendered media products with assumptions about who should or should not be engaging with that media product.

Looking at Self

While the previous code saw the interviewee looking around at the actions of others, this code has the individual looking at his or her self. How did the interviewee's own actions, feelings and thoughts in reaction to the media product tell the person about for whom the media product was apparently meant. While overall the pattern of reasons was similar to what was found when the individual was looking outward at others, there were some occasions when gendered assumptions did not hold up.

For Meant for Men Used Once, when looking at themselves and what they felt or did, only one man, Sam, who ultimately had a positive engaging with college admissions material, said it was relating to his own life, what he himself was doing.

"At least what I was looking at, because I was playing sports at the time, and I'm just focused on the stuff that's got a lot of people doing crew rowing on the river, and general college stuff. And I'm in a fraternity now, so that's definitely a male thing, obviously."

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Whereas the women were more likely to say they had a negative reaction, and thus saw it as meant for men. This was the case with Gloria, explaining pornography as meant for men because "it doesn't make feel good as a woman watching pornography." As seen in the figure below, more women than men indicated looking at how they responded to the media product in their determination as to why it was meant for men.

Similarly, in Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, men were likely to say the content of the media product in some way related to what they have done or thought or felt in their own lives.

> "As I was going through that whole struggle in high school with concepts of manliness, my relationship with women, and things like that, I think that's part of why I feel in love with that music, is how music dealt with that high school, late 90s sense of alienation and things like that."
> --Zane, grunge rock

Interestingly, the two women who indicated looking at their own actions for this evaluation indicated some desire to be more like the guys.

> "I find myself slightly different than the way I know most people to be, because [my best friend] and I would go and see these movies and not need to clench each other like most girls do. We were kinda like the guys watching the movies."
> --Lily, scary movies

> "I was not allowed to play."
> --Paige, football

Women with desires to be like men in some way were reacting like men who could find something to relate to in content deemed to be masculine. In this sense there was no difference between men and women for this code as both responded with a masculine interpretive stance to a masculine product.

However, for Meant for Women Used Once, men were the only ones to say that looking at their own reactions to the media products led them to determine that the media product was meant for the opposite gender. This reaction could be simple discomfort:

> "I'm sitting there watching this movie and I just felt physically uncomfortable. It's just the dialogue is all about feelings, being honest about the fact that being a man means that I'm a jerk, but I can get over it and I can change for you…"
> --Zane, *Love Actually*

To actual confusion:

> "When I watched it, it was with my mom. She was laughing a lot (Seeing Others) but I didn't understand any of the jokes because it was a lot of women's humor stuff."
> > --Ben, *Sex and the City*

These reactions are similar to those by the women in the Meant for Men Used Once, indicating that how some people know the media product was meant for the other gender is because they themselves did not like it on some level.

Again, this cross-gendering result did not completely hold when comparing the Meant for Women Used Repeatedly to the one for men. As with the men before them, the women said they in part made their determination because they could relate the content of the media product to their lives in some way.

> "No, I think almost everything in this column taps into my hopeless romantic side."
> > --Becky, online dating sites

> "That show, whatever the girls are going through is like what my friends and I go through daily."
> > --Eileen, *The Hills*

There were men who said they could not relate for the same reason the women could, such as Xavier and his experience with *Sex and the City*.

> "I don't see myself sitting down with a bunch of dudes watching or participating in any of these activities or watching any of these shows together."

However, there was one man who indicated a desire similar to the women in the Meant for Men Used Repeatedly.

> "Being as into fashion as I am is a pretty rare thing for a guy."
> > --Dean, fashion websites

Dean is unique in the sample, however, in that his desired line of work is fashion design, which has commonly been seen as a feminine occupation. Similar to the women in the previously mentioned Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, what is seen is not a desire not to be a gendered male individual, but to engage in activities traditionally held to be feminine.

Overall, similar to Seeing Others, there was a gendered line, in that cross-gendering was seen as not meant for me; however, this reaction was more likely when the media product was something engaged with only once. When the media product was engaged with repeatedly, something more personal could come

through, where the affection for what the media product represents transcends the feeling that I should not be engaging with it because it was not meant for me.

<u>Hearing from Others</u>

The past two codes related to what the interviewee observed in their daily lives, whether it was what other people did or what the interviewee did. For this code, men and women indicated that they heard from other people about for whom the media product was meant. Hearing from another person ranged from being directly told to more indirectly receiving the message, from body language to insults. The code includes the fear of social ostracism that could occur should the interviewee engage with a media product those around him or her deem inappropriate, based on gender expectations.

When the media product was seen as Meant for Men, it was only women who discussed sensing and hearing from those around them that gave them the idea they were engaging with something not meant for them. And interestingly, they are both about engaging with an Action/Adventure media product.

<u>Used Once</u>	<u>Used Repeatedly</u>

"Just because I feel like most girls I know would think it was awkward or weird that I'm so interested in them…"
  --Lily, action movies
	"It's like every time I would like watch or read stuff that had to do with guys, it's like it wasn't not accepted, like it wasn't talked about, and like when I would play with girly stuff, oh look how cute she is doing the girly stuff, doing the stuff she's supposed to be doing. But then when you play with stuff that's meant for boys, it's kinda like, oh, okay, I'll allow it but it's not really accepted, that kind of thing."
	  --Megan, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*

For the Meant for Women media products, men and women both discussed how men would be ridiculed by their peers if they were found engaging with something meant for women.

<u>Used Once</u>	<u>Used Repeatedly</u>
"Again because at the time that was not something guys did, that's not something they talked about.	"There's a stigma for boys. Even though the storyline now may be more gender neutral, I don't think

It was always, how strong are you, how many hits can you take. If you talk about something like feelings or something like that, you got hit."
   --Isaac, girlie cartoons

"I know a lot males if they were ever to watch them and let it known would probably get teased for watching them."
   --Lily, soap operas

there are any boys that would readily admit they like to watch General Hospital."
   --Gloria, soap opera

"Because it's about romance, and I feel it would be a faux pau for guys to want to go and see it with other guys. I think people would just look at them funny and say oh they must be gay, they're two guys going to see the movie together…"
   --Abby, *Sweet Home Alabama*

Men were also more likely to focus on how they were told by other men, from friends to fathers, that such media products are not meant for women, even if it was only told indirectly through the reaction of the other men.

Used Once

"I guess my friends. I didn't think about it when I first picked up the manga. They were like you know it's a girl's manga, right?"
   --Ted, romance manga

Used Repeatedly

"You start talking with your dad, and of course he's got his buddies over, and you kinda bring it up, and they're like oh no no, that's musicals and plays and all that are girly stuff…so you kinda start building that in your mind. Looking back now, I didn't like it, but I can't see any particular reason why I would call it girly other than it was told to me."
   --Isaac, *Grease*

"I want to say that like maybe it was my dad's reaction to the musical. I know he sat there and watched it a few times with everyone, but I think he was kinda rolling his eyes at it in certain parts. So maybe I thought, well this isn't quite for men based on my dad's reactions. But I don't know if that's true or not, I might just be totally making that up."
   --Leo, *Oklahoma*

Men overall were either more told or more recalled sensing what was inappropriate for them. Indeed, across the sense-making instances of the interview studied here, fewer women discussed similar problems with being a tomboy.

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<u>Hearing from Society</u>

Similar to the previous code, this code reflects how interviewees heard about for whom the media product was meant by receiving information from his or her sociocultural environment and not specific people. The person's society and/or culture created the impression that there are naturalized differences that govern which gender should engage with what type of media product. Essentially, this interpretive strategy is the recognition that there are stereotypes that inform and structure gender.

For the media products discussed as Meant for Men, men and women both discussed how the impression they get from the sociocultural environment on the traditions. Men and women agreed in both Used Once and Used Repeatedly that there are some masculine traditions.

<u>Used Once</u>	<u>Used Repeatedly</u>

"Because war is meant for men. I mean…they were guys that [fought the battles]. I mean, traditionally, war was just always thought of as a male sort of thing."
    --Dean, video games
	"Anytime I should show interest in it, oh yeah, that's cute, she likes Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, but oh look at all the boys playing…it just seemed like way more accepted in general that guys like that kind of stuff than girls did at the time."
	    --Megan, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*

They also agreed there are some feminine traditions the media products address.

<u>Used Once</u>	<u>Used Repeatedly</u>

"In my experience pornography is more about domination, and that's not something the general public like to think women want in the bedroom, like we're the pure virgins."
    --Gloria, pornography
	"I think that in general [women are] not supposed to be violent, so why would we enjoy violence?"
	    --Gloria, *Band of Brothers*

The assumptions as to what men and women are supposed to do, as based on interpretations of the sociocultural environment, replicate gender stereotypes; men are violent and enjoy sex while women are not on either count.

What is traditionally masculine or feminine is again the focus for the media products discussed as Meant for Women. However, as the nature of the media

products changed, the gender stereotypes changed to reflect the content of these products. Thus, because the media products were interpreted as meant for women, men and women discussed the traditions such media products relate to.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly

"Well, I suppose it's just socially expected for women to consume more music. … Women are socially constructed to stay at home and consume."
  --Becky, music CDs
	"I think it was the conditioning I had early on in my age that, you know, cooking is for women at home."
	  --Oliver, *Joy of Cooking*

And on the reverse, these media products do not relate to what has traditionally been considered the purview of men.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly

"Overall the items I listed seem to appeal to a feminine side that is generally shunned in society if males partake."
  --Xavier, Margret Cho comedy
	"It's emotional and relationship drama, which you know guys aren't supposed to have large or much dealing with. I say suppose because of course you know that's the stereotype."
	  --Franklin, romance manga

With this list, according to the people's interpretation of the sociocultural environment, men are not allowed to like feminine things such a romance and dramas, and certain types of activities, like collecting music and cooking, are the purview of women. Again, what exactly the stereotypes were are not the focus here, as many other worthy and detailed studies have outlined these informative generalities. Instead, as with the Seeing Others and Looking at Self codes, there were predictable gender divides due to the replication of hegemonic gender assumptions and categorizations.

Hearing from Media

    This code reflects men and women noticing material surrounding the media product that was seen as being meant for one or the other gender, basically some form of advertisement. Also included were any observations about the intentions of the producers of the media product, from those directly seen on the media product,

such as title, to inferences based on the producer's gender as to for whom that producer intended the media product.

Across all the Gendered Media Engaging Situations, the most common application of this code was in discussing how surrounding commercials were geared in a way that let the person know the media product it was attached to was one way or the other. Thus there were interpretations of masculine commercials attached to masculine media products:

> "Somehow it looks like it was designated for men because like the commercials you see when you compare them to like -- when I'm watching Desperate Housewives and watching basketball, I will definitely see two different commercials throughout the whole time. Those commercials are like more tuned to men products and stuff like that."
>   --Eileen, basketball

> "When they do advertisements for it, you'll see it on gaming websites, video game magazines that's audience is mainly teenage guys, twenty year old guys. When they have advertisements for these types of games you'll see them during sports games…"
>   --Kelvin, video games

As well as the interpretation of feminine commercials attached to feminine media products.

> "It's definitely a network for women, all the commercials are geared toward women."
>   --Jeanne, Lifetime movies

> "…all the ads are aimed at women – have you seen the Lavalife commercials? Rarely are the advertisements aimed at men alone. Actually, I can't think of any that aren't for phonesex sites."
>   --Becky, online dating sites

However, there were other triggers in the media content surrounding the media product that led people to interpret some media product as masculine or feminine.

Some aspect of the media product itself may clearly state the intended audience as male or female. Ralph seemed to think the question was odd, because the fitness magazine he engaged with once "says 'for women' underneath the title of the magazine." A feature directly associated with the media product may be interpreted as supporting a gendered interpretation:

> "I guess they don't really televise female athletes playing soccer very often…plus like all the announcers are always men."
>   --Tammy, soccer

There could even be a feature not directly seen with the media product that could be used to infer back about the gendered nature:

> "It's stereotyped, I think, in media, like other movies or other shows or other kinds of media will make reference to the Godfather, and make reference in such a way that it's a guy thing."
> --Kendra, *Godfather* movies

Across all of these examples is the unifying factor that some additional feature, either directly or indirectly attached to the media product under question, was used to infer something about the gendered nature of said media product.

Such cross-referencing is only one way in which people said they heard from the media about gendered media products. Other men and women made statements relying on their knowledge, either experienced or inferred, about the media product's creators that determined what was for men or women. This knowledge could be gleaned from what others said, as Chad said he learned the anime *Digimon* was meant for men because "There was an article that deliberately stated it was manufactured for boys." This knowledge could be inferred based on ideas about economics:

> "It's pretty hard to market towards somebody who the marketing team feels – I mean, why gear a car magazine towards women when you're not going to make as much of a profit off it as you would if you were going to market your magazine toward a male audience."
> --Dean, car magazines

Finally, this knowledge could be inferred based on the gender of the media producer:

> "Jane Austen in general is very much a girl, very much like she wrote for women, that was her aim."
> --Tammy, Jane Austen novels

> "I always for some reason think that anything written by women is meant for women and anything written by men is meant to be for men, with a certain degree of variability."
> --Yuri, Norah Jones

Combining this knowledge aspect with the cross-referencing, as seen in the figure below, men and women tended to use both equally for their inferring the gendered nature of the media product, with one exception. In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, more women mentioned the Hearing from Media interpretive strategy in their explanation. However, when looking at the qualitative nature of this code, as

broken down above, men and women would both use this strategy in no particular pattern.

Seeing the Features

The most commonly employed interpretive strategy for explaining why the media product being discussed was gendered, this code involved people pointing out the various features in the media product that meant it was intended for a specific gender. The features are included in the coding scheme as detailed in Appendix B. These various whats were used to determine the how – whenever the interviewee mentioned one type of feature, the explanation was coded to include this interpretive strategy. In other words, the whats of the features provided the basis for determining why something is masculine versus feminine, and typically these features matched dominant gender stereotypes.

Thus there were certain features that were interpreted as masculine and led to the determination that a media product containing these features was "naturally" Meant for Men. The most common assumption was that anything with violence or sex is meant for men. These features may be mentioned separately:

> "The importance to action and technology in the text…all of them, I think, are specially focused on action, versus the emotion more present in the media meant for women."
>   --Alice, science fiction novels

> "It's definitely a hip-hop sort of movie, and again the overt sexuality in that aspect."
>   --Barclay, *Coach Carter*

Or the features may be found combined in the same media product:

> "The explicit content. They're extremely violent, and they degrade women. There are very little female characters in the video games, and when they are they're half naked."
>   --Carla, violent video game

> "The marketing strategy appears to be towards men, you know, with the big boobs, large guns, and guys tackling each other is generally, I don't know, I guess directed towards men. Men like to see people beating up on each other on the sports field or other."
>   --Ted, sports video games

Another common approach was to focus on the gender of the main characters in the media product. Male main characters meant the media product was for men because men would best be able to identify with them.

> "I guess that's because the male characters are more dominant in the television show."
> --Barbara, *Lost*

> "The girls in the original series are either a) tomboys or b) stereotypically girly: plus, the male characters outnumbered them, gestalt shows that the show was made with male interest in mind."
> --Chad, *Digimon*

There are other features thought to be specific to what men do more than women.

> "Well Animal House is a movie based on a fraternity in college, and basically it's a bunch of guys that are really probably drunk all the time and just do hilarious things."
> --Vance, *National Lampoon's Animal House*

While not listed here for examples, I want to point out the abundance of men and women who said a Sports media product was Meant for Men because sports themselves are male activities. Across all these various features being highlighted is the unifying concept that the interpretation of these features is in line with gender stereotypes about what men are supposed to want and be like.

The same interpretive process is then seen with the media products Meant for Women, but with different features being reported as feminine. As men have sex and violence, women traditionally have romance and emotions as their purview.

> "It's just like being all romantic, and lovey-dovey is seen more as a girl thing."
> --Kaitlin, *Romeo & Juliet*

> "The main storyline is usually talking about what happened to a female's life and how that led her to find her true love, the romance is more appealing to women."
> --Sally, Disney cartoons

While those women discussed the romance aspect as being more for women, other women added in the complication that romance is not for men by directly comparing them.

> "Romance is for women, sex is for men. Which is unfair, cause I love a good romp as much as a man does, and dating is about romance."
> --Becky, online dating sites

As with the media products Meant for Men, there was the recognition with media products Meant for Women that female main characters are for women who can identify with them.

> "The female main protagonist. … And I got interested in it because I saw some scenes and I thought they were pretty emotionally compelling and I thought would be interesting."
>   --Ted, romance manga

> "It incorporates problems that females have and males are less likely to relate to, say pregnancy or meeting the man of your dreams."
>   --Xavier, *Sex and the City*

There were other features used as the basis for interpreting a media product as more meant for women than men.

> "They don't have like action shows, or dramas, or sports. It's a lot of cooking, how to stay in shape, and then they have the Housewives show which follows rich women around."
>   --Sam, Bravo Network

> "90% of the characters were girls and the characters were adorable ponies…it was practically a living girly-girl stereotype."
>   --Chad, *My Little Pony*

> "The focus on relationships, and the stereotypical vision on men, as heroes to rescue the damsel in distress."
>   --Alice, romance novels

As with the media products Meant for Men, determinations of what is a feminine media product was aligned with the gender stereotypes of what a woman should be, do, think, feel and want.

As with the masculine media products, there are those men and women who point out that what they are interpreting is in fact a stereotype. What is unclear is if for every person who clearly stated that their interpretation was stereotyped, if there are other men and women who did not recognize this stereotyping, or recognized it and for some reason chose not to openly address, even criticize, the issue.

Knowing Men, Women

The final interpretive strategy is similar to Hearing from Society; only here the interpretation does not include assumptions about what men or women should be doing, as inferring knowledge of sociocultural norms. Instead it is more the general assumption that men are this way and women are that way without anything said that could be used to infer where these differences came from. The assumption is such differences are just there, natural; that this is how things are, men are made to be this, and women are made to be that.

Similarities refer back to Seeing Others and Hearing from Others, in the sense that there are things men in general do and women do not that can be used to classify something as Meant for Men.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly

"Men like things to conquer, stats to prove worthiness, levels and numbers to boast about, enemies to defeat."
  --Becky, video games
	"You always think boys play videogames."
	  --Deanna, video games

"Just fighting, that's like the pinnacle of male competition, that's how males solve disputes, that's competition at its purest form for a male."
  --Ralph, Ultimate Fighting Championship
	"If you're a male and you're high society, you read The New Yorker and you invariably have high end liquor at your house."
	  --Sam, high end liquor advertisements

While at the same time, men and women were similar in their ideas that women generally do not do those things associated with the media content.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly

"Generally women and girls aren't really brought up to get into fighting and combat and that sort of thing."
  --Kendra, video games
	"If [women] watch, maybe they are watching with a male friend or sibling or father or whatever."
	  --Eileen, *Rambo* movies

"There are probably examples in the movie where girls would not want to watch this, or girls would probably get offended by it, even, if they watch some of the stuff in Animal House." --Vance, *Animal House*	

Again, we see the gender stereotypes operating in that men are violent and competitive while women are not, but there is no reference back to society in saying either should or are supposed to be that way.

The reverse focus occurs with the media products that were seen as Meant for Women Used Once. Interpretations of media products Used Once and Used Repeatedly show that they are involved in the general assumptions people have about women.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly
"All of these items are kind of sweet and play up on the emotional side of women." 　--Isabel, romance novels	"This is kinda awful to say but I always just think of women as reading more I guess…that was just my first instinct." 　--Barbara, books on tape
	"Because it encompasses the idea of finding love. Women are all about finding love, and men don't seem to be, I guess. I guess that stereotype of a program draws in more women because they are more concerned about getting married and having babies than men are." 　--Kendra, *Rock of Love*

Meanwhile, men and women agreed that such media products did not fit with their general assumptions about men.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly
"She focuses on her interactions with homosexual males. This idea may scare men considering the majority of males are said to be heterosexual." 　--Xavier, Margret Cho comedy	"It just doesn't have any of the themes of storytelling that you generally associate with more masculine fare. … Even the sexual content is kinda not what we kinda associate with what men want, stereotypically speaking." 　--Zane, *Sex and the City*
"Men usually I don't think listen to love songs. … The emotion of finding [your soul mate] really isn't appealing to men for the most part." 　--Yuri, Norah Jones	"Men are attracted to action, women like romance – stereotypical but it tends to be true." 　--Chad, *Notting Hill*

Comparing the answers here for Meant for Women with those as Meant for Men show an interesting pattern. While men and women discussed both what generally men do and women don't for media products Meant for Men, there was a tendency for the genders to split in discussing this same issue for media products Meant for Women. The women were more likely to focus on what generally women do while men were more likely to discuss what generally men do not do.

Summary Chart

There are 7 categories of Why Gendered and four Gendered Media Engaging Situations in which to compare men and women. This results in a total of 28 locations in which there may be convergings and divergings. These locations have been plotted for men and women in the summary chart below. In this chart, each code is a specific color. Percentages are given only for those comparisons deemed to be divergent.

Within each situation, men and women were compared for how often they mentioned a media product that could be recorded as that specific code. This comparison happened in two ways. First, one-way analyses of variance (degrees of freedom 1, 42) were calculated for each code. Given the small sample size, any difference significant at $p<0.10$ or less was considered a diverging. The size of the significance was indicated as follows: a = $p<.001$; b = $p<.01$; c = $p<.05$; d = $p<.10$.

Second, the illustrations in the summary chart were examined to find additional divergings that occurred but did not reach statistical significance due to the sample size. An illustrative difference was considered a diverging if the magnitude of one code's frequency was approximately twice that of the other or more. If there was no mention by one gender, then the other had to be at least 2%, indicating at least two separate people mentioned that code.

There are locations when either the men or the women reported a solitary mention of a code. Given the sample size, it is hard to determine if this is a pattern that may result in a diverging or a converging. As such, these discrepancies will not be included as divergings. Statistical and illustrative divergings are indicated in the summary chart as the only ones to have their corresponding percentages displayed.

Statistical. Analysis of the one-way ANOVA results indicated 4 divergings that met the criteria for significant difference listed above. Those divergings are demarcated by bold, italicized percentages in the summary chart to more efficiently demonstrate these differences. Thus, there were 14.3% of the total locations that showed a significant difference between men and women in discussing why the media product they chose was gendered. In Meant for Men Used Once, more women indicated looking at their selves in their determination ($\underline{F} = 5.633$, $p<.05$). In

Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, more men indicated seeing what others were doing as part of their explanation (F = 2.861, p<.10). In Meant for Women Used Once, more men indicated looking at their own actions and thoughts (F = 6.555, p<.01), while more women discussed the features of the media product in their determination (F = 3.496, p<.10).
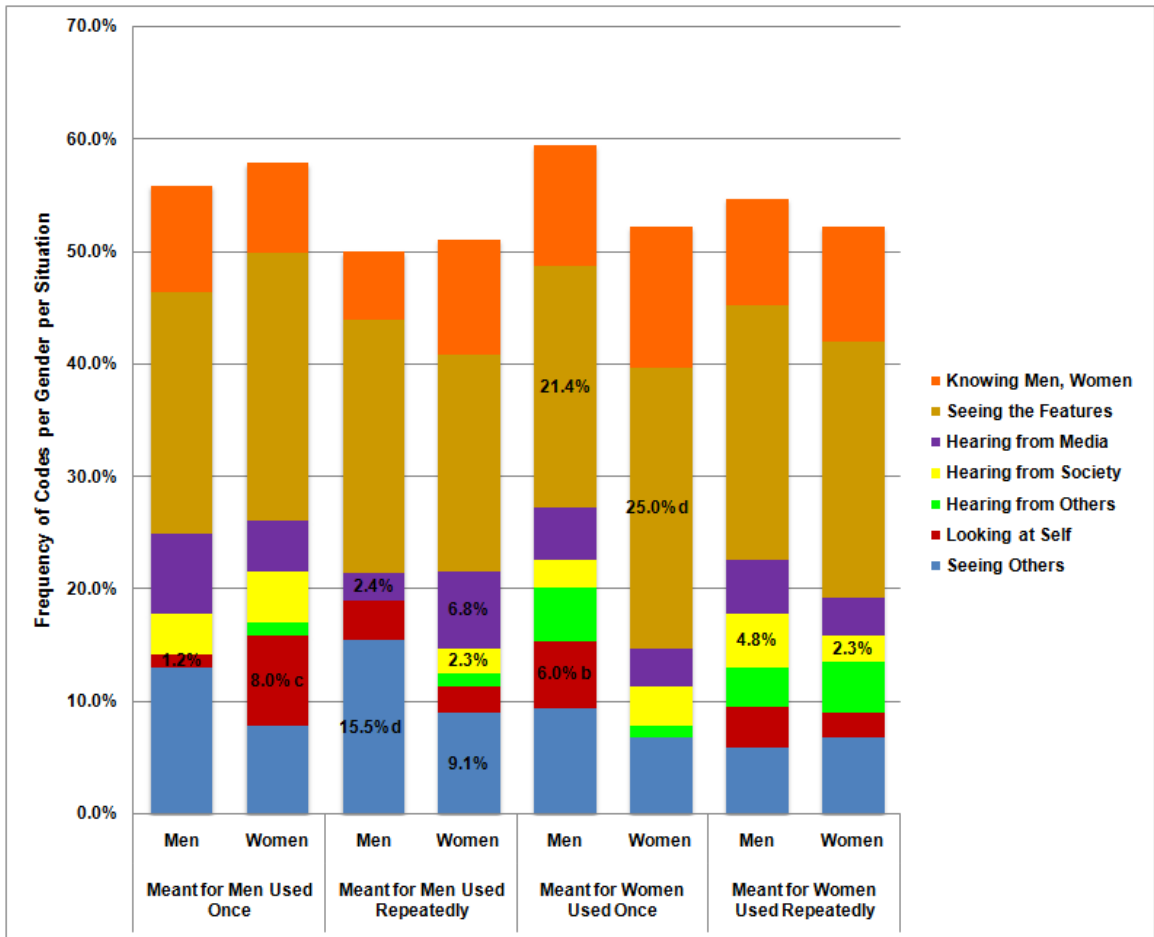
Summary Chart 5.1.   Why Media Products Gendered

Illustrative. In addition to the statistical divergings, there are 4 divergings in the summary chart that meet the criteria for an illustrative diverging. This means 10.7% of total locations can be classified as such. In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, women appear more likely to say the media product was gendered because they heard it in the media and/or in the norms of society. In Meant for Women Used Once, men appear more likely to indicate having heard from their

family and friends that the media product was gendered. In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, men appear more likely to say they heard the media product was gendered based on sociocultural norms.

       Divergings versus Convergings. Combining the statistical and illustrative divergings results in 28.6% of the total locations showing differences in how men and women ascribed the reasons for why they saw media products as gendered across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. However, this means that 71.4% of the locations showed convergings, none of which were due to the presence of no codes. Thus, for the most part, men and women were alike in how often they mentioned simply knowing about men and women, focusing on the features of the media product, taking their cues from the media, and noticing what others were doing when it came to determining why a media product was meant for men versus women.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS: REASONS FOR ENGAGING

Research questions

How men and women diverge and converge on their:

- What led to the initial engaging, i.e. selecting to initially engage

- How volitional the engaging was

Why Initiated

This coding scheme measures selectings in the sense that it aligns with the traditional media uses and effects approach. The approach of uses-and-gratifications is concerned with what use the person makes of the media product they engage in, arguing that in some way the use will gratify the need or desire of the individual (Rubin, 2002; Ruggiero, 2000). When combined with a focus on how the media impacts the individual, forming the uses-and-effects approach, the concern over use centers on what led the individual to engage with that media product: was it a psychological, social, or situational need?

The coding scheme reported here, along with its counterpart covered below, somewhat addresses this approach. However, the chief difference is that the question put to the individuals was designed to steer the person to discussing a need – this aspect of uses-and-effects is covered with the Helps coding scheme in Chapter 8. The purpose of this chapter's coding scheme was to determine themes in the responses to the question: what led you to engage with this media product for

the first or only time? The exact need fueling an engaging is not addressed except as it informed the activity that eventually led to the engaging.

Each answer could be coded more than once with a different code if there appeared to be unique reasons seen by the interviewee as explaining their first engaging with the media product. Due to the possibility that each Gendered Media Engaging Situation could have multiples codes for this sense-making instance, the qualitative examples given may reflect these overlaps. Where necessary, such overlaps are highlighted to avoid confusion as to how the example reflects a given code.

What follows is a discussion of what each code means for this particular sense-making instance, with examples given to illustrate how this code manifested for both men and women within the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. The eight codes reflect the reasons given by interviewees to explain what led them to engage with the media products they chose to speak about.

After the quotes are given to illustrate each code, any pattern or singular finding will be highlighted and briefly discussed. After the discussion of the qualitative examples, statistical and illustrative tests are reported to highlight where men and women converge and diverge in their frequency of mentioning a particular code within a particular situation. Summary Chart 6.1 illustrates this comparison. Any discussion of comparing across situations is minimal during the qualitative section as the topic is the focus for Chapter 10.

Satisfied

The first code in this sense-making instance's scheme was based on the interviewees' saying they had heard or seen something that generated an interest or curiosity in the media product, which fueled the individual's desire to engage with the media product in order to satisfy that curiosity. The exact need was an action, the need to satisfy, and what personally generated the initial interest or curiosity is not the focus here. Looking across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations, there were various reasons why someone desired to satisfy his interest, for both same-gender media engagings as well as cross-gender media engagings.

The first type of satisfying commonly discussed was when a man or a woman saw someone else engaging with the media product and wanted to try engaging with it. As an experience with a media product meant for men, Lana acknowledged her interest in playing the video game *Splinter Cell*, even if for just a brief time, came from watching her brother play it.

> "I saw my brother playing it…and it looked interesting. … From time to time my brother would tease me about how bad I am with games. So I think with Splinter Cell I wanted to show off a little bit and show him that I can play Splinter Cell just as good as you can."
> ---Lana, video games

In discussing her experience with a romance novel as something meant for women she'd only used once, Alice said she just wanted to know what women saw in them.

> "I saw a girl reading one. Thought about the fact that I had never tried, and wanted to see what the fuss was about."

Men, in experiences that are cross-gender media engagings, reported similar reasons, as they wanted to know what women saw in the media products they were engaging with, which led them to engage with their respective media products repeatedly.

> "Curiosity, mostly. I wanted to see what the appeal was to it. … Ok, what's make this a girly cartoon?"
> --Isaac, girlie cartoons

> "I had a lot of friends that were girls who were reading it, and they would read it obsessively. I was just kinda interested in what the big fuss was about, even though I probably would not be interested in it. I wanted to see what their big craze was about."
> --Yuri, People magazine

> "All these girls in my school were acting very differently, they were being more open to things…and they're not so cold about things, and that's what led me to watch what this show for the first time. I was like what is it that this show has that is so special, that's making people change?"
> --Adam, *Sex and the City*

This type of satisfying then involves wanting to understand better some person of the gender for whom the media product is meant.

A second type of satisfying to point out involves seeing some advertisement that hinted at what to expect from the media product. The advertisement could have prompted engaging simply because, as Gerald discussed with his experience with

something meant for men and used only once, it seemed like a good idea at the time, which would be an overlapping with another code, Filled Time.

> "It was a break before school was starting up… I had seen that movie advertised a couple years before as a preview at the theatre, and I just thought, you know what, why not watch it?"
> --Gerald, *The Transporter*

Whereas for Adam, he was a fan of the star of the show, and so seeing the commercial alerted him to the potential for an experience that was seen as both meant for men and something to be used repeatedly.

> "The first bands that I listened to were, one of them was 2 Live Crew and the other was Public Enemy, and Flavor Flav was in Public Enemy, and all of a sudden I see him with a Viking hat on VH-1 in a commercial and I'm like I gotta check this out."
> --Adam, *Flavor of Love/Rock of Love*

Another way the advertisement might impact engaging was discussed by Becky, who related the advertisement to a need in her life, resulting in an experience that was seen as meant for women and something to be used repeatedly.

> "I had just returned home from two years abroad, and I was lonely, and the bar scene never does it for me. I saw the commercials for Lavalife so I thought I'd give it a try."
> --Becky, online dating sites

Regardless of what the advertisement meant to the person at the time, the end result was the same; it prompted a level of interest in the men and women that compelled them to seek out the media product being advertised. Unlike the first type of satisfying, gender did not enter into the discussion.

Similar to the previous type of satisfying, this third one focuses on how the media product discussed was in some way similar to previous media products the person had engaged with and liked. The satisfying comes from the question, will I like this similar media product as much as I do the original? Lily answered the question with a yes when she discussed as her Meant for Men Used Repeatedly going from action movies to horror movies.

> "I also liked action so much that I think it just drove me over into one step higher and going into the gory movies."

As something Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, Megan could also answer affirmatively, as her affection for a character on one show compelled her to stay with the character when she starred in a different television series.

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> "I watched Laguna Beach, and then Lauren was one of the main characters on Laguna Beach…she made her own show called The Hills…she was someone in the media that I could kind of relate to, and that's hard to come by."
>   --Megan, *The Hills*

As an example of a cross-gender media engaging, Jeremy could also answer the satisfying question affirmatively due to his fandom of a particular computer game series, which he saw as meant for women and something to use repeatedly.

> "I had always been a fan of Sim City. I kinda followed progression of the company that made the various Sim games. … I thought it would be kinda interesting. It really wasn't anything specific that caused me to do that other than just curiosity."
>   --Jeremy, video games

However, seeing the two things as similar does not necessarily mean the end result of the satisfying will be positive. In fact, as Barbara discussed for her Meant for Women Used Once watching *Lipstick Jungle*, being too similar can be deleterious to further engaging.

> "I like loved the show Sex and the City, so when Lipstick Jungle came out I was interested to see if it would be as good was Sex and the City while still being different. So I watched it once. "

Again, like the satisfying based on the commercial, there was less discussion about gender; the interest was more based on the individual's personal preferences. Thus, the majority of the satisfying drives were not based on gendered divides, but instead on the individual's interpretation of their personal preferences as it interacted with what the media product was expected to offer.

Sought Out

        This code is similar to the satisfying drive in the previous code, but instead of an interest fueling the engaging, the drive here is to gather information. Men and women across the four situations discussed experiences they had with gendered media products, both same-gender and cross-gender, undertaken so that some information from the media product could be gathered and used by the individual, either in the situation being dealt with at the time of the engaging, or in some future situation believed by the individual to benefit from such information.

        The first type of seeking out was due to something happening in the individual's life that required the person to use this media. These situations can be

one time occurrences, such as Sally seeking a car and Sam looking for a college in Meant for Men Used Once.

> "I needed to buy a car, I was tired of everyone telling me what kind of car I should get, so I decided to do some research myself."
> --Sally, car magazines

> "I was obviously a junior or senior in high school, started thinking about colleges. … I read them carefully, and read every one I got. I really decided to try and logically pick the best college that was for me."
> --Sam, college admissions material

However, that one time occurrence could have been the initiation of a longer engaging that extended over numerous situations. Ben represents a same-gender example from Meant for Men with his first encounter with ESPN's *Sportscenter*, while Oliver represents a cross-gender example with his use of the Joy of Cooking cookbook.

> "The World Series was on [and my hometown team was playing], and I could never stay up to watch those games. … I would turn on Sportscenter to see highlights the next day."
> --Ben, *Sportscenter*

> "My mother threw her back out, and it was Thanksgiving… I said let me do it, and she kind of had a look of horror on her face because at that time all I could do was cook hamburgers. And so I saw the book and I just figured I'd look in the book and follow everything they suggested, which is what I did. It turned out good."
> --Oliver, *Joy of Cooking*

Whether used only for that specific situation, or used and determined that it could be useful to continue engaging, these are examples of both men and women engaging in same-gender and cross-gender media engaging if it helps them deal with what was going on in their lives. Discussions of how engaging with the media product helped is the focus of Chapter 8.

People also reported using the media product for the first or only time because something about who they were at the time compelled them to seek out information to improve their selves in the long run and not specifically just that initial situation. Deanna and Sam said they engaged with only once similar types of media products meant for women because of a desire to start dating the members of the opposite gender.

> "I was just starting to get like an interest in boys, more like romantic feelings and not just platonic, and I didn't have like a sister or anything, and I would not talk to

my mom about this stuff back then. So I didn't really have anyone to talk to or get advice from…"
   --Deanna, Bop! Magazine

"Getting into college, well like a) you're trying to make yourself as appealing to women as possible, so you want to see what they think, and what articles would apply to them."
   --Sam, Cosmopolitan

Other men said they were hoping to gain some insight into some area of their lives beyond just dating, such as Sam and his desire to be more knowledgeable about alcohol and Ralph with his desire to possibly help women exercise better.

"I had been in college for two years, and I was starting to develop a taste for more expensive types of alcohol… And I just assumed that knowing stuff about how to make drinks that have a sophisticated palette is less alcoholic than just drinking crap to get drunk."
   --Sam, high end liquor advertising

"I was at work, at [a fitness center], and one of the other trainers is a girl. She was reading it. I had a free half hour, and I was reading it because I have a lot of female clients, thought maybe I could pick up something I could use."
   --Ralph, women's fitness magazine

All of these examples represent media products that would be considered more informative in nature. However, that does not mean that a media product intended by the producers to be entertaining cannot be seen as informative in some way by those individuals who engage with it. In the next type of seeking out, there are examples of people getting a type of information about of entertainment products.

The final type of seeking out to discuss here represents people explaining that they used the media product because the product in some way addressed an idea the individual has for how he or she would like to be in the future. If the previous type was the person thinking about how they are just becoming, then this type represents the person who does not see this change occurring at the time of engaging with the media product, but who would like that change to occur at some point. Two examples come from Lana, who was vacillating between her masculine and feminine sides. As something she interpreted as meant for men that she used repeatedly, Lana discussed how she went to the Hot Topic's website in order to at some point not be as girly as she had been.

"Also at the time I was getting a lot of these prissy girl magazines that just did not fit my personality, and it kind of frustrated me. … There's a side of me that I want to explore that doesn't have to involve me being girly all the time."

As something she saw as meant for women but used only once, she was thinking about revisiting that girly aspect of herself.

> "I think it was just one of those days when I was like I think I just want to play a game that's just specifically for me, that kinda understands the way I think and the way I feel. After playing shoot'em up games like the guys play, it gets tiring and it gets boring. So you need a little girl time, and I think that's what I was leaning towards…"
> --Lana, online fashion game

For Eileen, her wish fulfillment is even further off, as she hopes to live, to a degree, like the people of one of her favorite shows she sees as meant for women, *The Hills*.

> "That's what I want to move to [Los Angeles]…so I can sort of relate to it…and I want to see how they make, like what they have to do to make it on their own without their parents' support and all that."

While the website is arguably informative, in the sense that it is advertising products the retailer sells, the last two engagings are with entertainment media products, and yet they were sought to provide some insight into the person's sense of self, whether it be an issue of gender identity or fondest wishes for the future. While perhaps not cold hard facts such as those found in the car magazine and the cookbook, to the individual they were informative nonetheless.

Stumbled Across

As an individual moves through life, he or she will engage with a media product that was not at that moment intentionally sought out. This code reflects those situations, when the engaging was something that happened because the individual simply came across a media product that caught their interest for at least a little while. Both men and women said they were moving through an environment containing the media product, and this moving was temporarily halted when they stumbled across the particular media product. Across the situations, there were two primary types of stumbling across media products as a way to initiate an engaging.

For some of these individuals, the chance encounter with the media product occurred when they were on their own. The media environments range from a library to a website, and the environments could foster only one use or repeated encounters, with media products meant for that individual's gender or for the

opposite gender. Alice and Henry both engaged in cross-gendering when they encountered a media product they decided to use only once.

> "I was wandering in a library, and the cover was shiny. I know it's a stupid reason to pick a book, but I made nice discoveries this way!"
> --Alice, science fiction novels

> "I think I was just channel surfing, and saw the movie, and there were no logos on the screen, and so I saw the movie and not the channel."
> --Henry, Oxygen movie

Lana and Dean both came across their cross-gendered media products via the internet, and decided to continue going back to something they had initially stumbled across.

> "I think I was playing around on the internet, and I happened to kinda bump into. It was totally by accident."
> --Lana, Hot Topic website

> "Actually how I first came in contact with the website was through Jalopnic. They had an article or a link or whatever, and I just happened to click on the link. … It was through a car's website that originally got me involved in the knowledge of said website."
> --Dean, fashion websites

While these examples were all of cross-gendering, the figure below in the Summary Chart illustrates that there were individuals who stumbled across things meant for their own gender in ways similar to these examples.

For other individuals, this encounter with the media product occurred when they were in the company of other individuals, but those individuals had no major impact on whether or not the media product was engaged with. Those other individuals may have had some say as to whether or not to stay with what stumbled upon, but the other individuals did not initiate the encounter with the media product; they were just accoutrements to the initiation. People could recall clearly the way watching with other people impacted their stumbling across a media product, such as Elliot with his wife and Deanna with her family.

> "Just the general perfect storm of having a wife, and having cable, and sitting on the couch. It was just sort of flipped through and arrived at, and very successful with the other half of the target audience in the house, so I watched it mostly by association."
> --Elliot, parenthood shows

> "I was with [my family], and we are just flipping through channels, trying to find something to watch, and it was on so we watched it…"
> --Deanna, America's Next Top Model

Whereas other individuals could not recall as clearly the role other individuals played, and only recalled that other people were around at the time the engaging began, such as Chad with his mother and Kendra with her roommates.

> "I don't think I was in school, and Mom spent most of her time working around the house so I watched TV and drew."
>   --Chad, *My Little Pony*

> "I have four girl roommates, and we just somehow got into watching this train wreck of a reality show all the time."
>   --Kendra, *Rock of Love*

Elliot and Chad were recalling experiences with media products they saw as meant for women but used only once, while Deanna were recalling experiences seen as meant for women and used repeatedly.

As seen in the illustration below, men in the Meant for Women Used Once were more likely to explain their engaging with a media product as something they just stumbled across. Indeed, there is overlap with the coding scheme following this one in how men responded to the question as to what led to their engaging with such a media product. The prevalence of indicating it just happened, that the men neither sought it out or had it forced on them, is an interesting occurrence and will be discussed in more length in Chapter 10.

Filled Time

Related to the previous code, there are times in an individual's life when he or she is in a situation and has nothing to do. Sometimes to fill this void of activity, the individual will decide to engage with a media product, even if it is not something seen as meant for their own gender. Discussions of this type of activity driving the media engaging constitute this code.

The first type of filling time is similar to the idea in uses-and-gratifications that the media is turned to as a diversion from other activities. Indeed, men and women did say that it was either engage with this media product, even if it was a cross-gendering, if it meant having something to do. For Franklin, who saw Dungeons and Dragons as something meant for men, playing it repeatedly gave him something to do in his small town.

> "I didn't have much to do. I lived in a small rural town. Didn't really get out much."

While Carla watched soap operas for a short period of time just to have something to do at her grandmother's house.

> "So it was spring break, that's why I started watching Days of Our Lives, because I had nothing else to do at our grandmother's house, and so I just started watching soap operas."
> --Carla, soap operas

Isaac, on the other hand, says he was just too lazy to go out and find something else to do than watch musicals repeatedly with his mother.

> "Mom was watching it, and she had control of the TV, and there wasn't another TV in the house that I could go watch. And I didn't want to go play with one of my other brothers. So it was either sit there or go find something else to do, and I was really not in the mood to go find something else to do."
> --Isaac, *Grease*

In times when there is nothing else to do, even a cross-gender media engaging can be seen as a more useful way to spend time, whether you are a man or a woman.

The second type of filling time was more media specific. In times when there was nothing else in the media, even a media product from across the gendered divide can be seen as a worthy substitute, and it may even lead for continual engaging. For Tammy and Kaitlin, this meant turning to soccer – for Tammy just once, for Kaitlin many times.

> "I think it was just one of those situations when nothing was on TV, so I was like well, I'll give it a shot."
> --Tammy, soccer

> "Nothing, I was getting bored, and somebody switched on the TV, and we started watching the World Cup…"
> --Kaitlin, soccer

For Kelvin, he recalled a time when the lack of movies in the theatres meant he had to go see a rather disliked romantic movie with his girlfriend, who brought him to it as coded below.

> "There was nothing else on, really. I think it came out early January, Valentine's Day, so I guess late January. And she wanted to go see a movie, there wasn't much going on in the movie theatre in January anyway."
> --Kelvin, *The Wedding Date*

While Sam will often go to a cable network he interprets as meant for women when there is nothing else on television.

> "Top Chef seemed like it was always on… So I would always remember the number of the channel of Bravo, and I would flip to it if nothing else was on. And even if it wasn't Top Chef, I would kinda watch whatever was on there."
> --Sam, Bravo Network

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However, while these examples have all been cross-gender, that does not mean a same-gender media engaging could be initiated by such needing to find something in the media to engage with. For Franklin, who watches classic horror movies at least once, sometimes he will seek them out, but sometimes he will just come upon them to fill time.

> "I watched another film when it just happened to be on TV and I was just killing time."

Whether there the individual thought there was absolutely nothing else to do, or there was just no other media product to engage with, same-gender and cross-gender media engagings can occur because the individual needs to fill time, for an hour, a day, or longer.

Assigned to It

Just as the label implies, this code was developed due to those interviewees who said that their initial or only engaging with a gendered media product occurred because they were assigned to engage with the media product as a school project.

As seen in Summary Chart below, only women recounted experiences where the initial or first engaging was due to being told they had to engage with it for a school project. Jeanne recalled how she watched a bout from the World Wrestling Foundation in her high school class, and that was her only time engaging with the media product meant for men.

> "I remember watched in a psychology class in my senior year of high school…I think part of it was just talking about the violence…so that was the time I did was a significant time of one."

Whereas Tammy and Gloria were both assigned to a certain media product they saw as meant for men, but had such a positive response to this engaging that they continued to engage with it after the project was done.

> "Actually we had to do a project in my freshman year in high school on diversity, so we had to pick somebody of a different race to like do a project on, and Oprah was taken so I took Tiger Woods. … As I was doing this project, part of it was learning golf, so I learned it and watched it and was like wow, this is interesting, who knew."
>   --Tammy, golf

> "I had to for class…we had to read the book, and as our treat, I guess, we got to watch the movie and compare it."
>   --Gloria, *Band of Brothers*

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With these previous examples being seen as meant for men, only two examples came up as tasks that were assigned led to engaging with a media product seen as meant for women. And neither woman cared enough for this media product to want to continue the engaging outside of the English class in which it was assigned.

> "It was required in my school, in my school curriculum, in my English textbook, so I need to read that."
> --Kaitlin, *Romeo & Juliet*

> "I read the book in [a college English class]."
> --Tammy, Jane Austen novels

Interestingly, no woman said that they engaged with something they say as meant for women the first time and then decided to repeatedly engage with it after it was assigned to them. While being assigned may be a good way to encounter something cross-gender -- something the individual may not have been encountered before but finds herself interested enough to continue engaging; this is probably not as necessary for a same-gender media product.

Brought to It

  As seen in the Summary Chart below, this was the most commonly mentioned explanation as to why a person engaged with their discussed media product for the first or only time. The code refers to the interviewee indicating that some other individual introduced the media product as something with which that individual wanted the interviewee to engage. In a sense, the interviewee felt like she or he was taken by the hand and brought to the media product.

  For some, they were brought to their discussed media products by a family member. For those who say the media product as meant for men, most of the time this family member was their dad or brother.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly
"It was around the holidays, and my brother and I just got the new game system… We were excited to play, and Madden was one of the games [my parents] bought for us." --Ralph, video games	"Well my dad would always watch these movies in the living room, and he always was kinda trying to get me to watch them, so one day I did…I said okay and I watched the movie." --Barbara, cowboy movies
"First I was exposed to it through my brothers and my dad." --Eileen, basketball	"My dad asked me if I wanted to go to Ozzfest and I wanted to go." --Xavier, metal music

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For those who said they were brought to a media product meant for women, that family member tended to be a woman, such as a mother, a sister, or, as in the two cases below, a grandmother.

Used Once	Used Repeatedly

"My grandma bought it for me, so I watched it."
    --Gina, Barbie movie
	"It was my nana's favorite show. For awhile my parents were separated, and while that was happening we lived with my nana… When we came home from school, General Hospital would just be coming on what on TV…"
	    --Gloria, soap opera

Thus, the female member who brought the person to the media product was of the gender that matched who the person saw the media product as being meant for.

This same type of gendering can be seen when the person who brought the interviewee to the media product was a romantic partner, from girlfriend to wife. For women, a cross-gender engaging with a media product tended to be the result of a boyfriend. For Gloria, this resulted in a onetime exposure to pornography.

"I was at my boyfriend's house…and he had three guy roommates, and they were all like have you ever seen porn, and I said no, okay then we're gonna make you watch this, and I was like okay, and they put it in."

For Kendra, her boyfriend at the time led her to being watching *The Godfather* movies: "The guy I was dating, I think, he kinda introduced me to them." The only man to indicate being exposed to a cross-gender media product was Zane, who reluctantly had to watch *Love Actually* when his wife watched it with her family.

"It was the holidays and I was with my significant other's family…they watch a lot of movies at the holidays."

Interestingly, while men did say they were brought to engaging with a media product meant for women that they ultimately used more than once, none of them indicated this initiation was due to a significant other making the introduction. However, as we shall see in Chapter 7, one reason men gave for continuing to engage with such products is because of their significant others.

For the third type of being brought, the gendering seen in the previous two types is not as obvious. Unless you consider that the pattern from the previous two as an overarching pattern that implies the gender of the friends. There were occasions when the gender of the friend is clearly mentioned and matched with the

interpreted gender of the media product, such as these men's cross-gender engagings, where only for Yuri was it a onetime encounter.

> "I had a friend who enjoyed it, so she introduced me to it. And it was a time when I was trying to branch out, find some different music…"
> --Yuri, Norah Jones

> "I didn't really kinda jump into it. When I was living in the dorm, I went to go visit one of friends on another floor, she said let's watch Grey's Anatomy. I said what's this?"
> --Vance, *Grey's Anatomy*

> "My roommate's girlfriend is the avatar or the reincarnation of chaos, and one of those things happens to be that she will randomly send me stuff. … And one of the particular times was a link to a shoujo manga online."
> --Franklin, romance manga

However, even without the gender of the friend being clear, given how the person has interpreted the media product as gendered, and given ever present gender stereotypes, we would infer that the friends who introduced the media product belonged to the audience the media product for whom it was meant. Interestingly, this is where the same-gender media engagings came in, as Oliver discussed watching *Friday the 13th* once, Becky mentioned her brief time with CDs, and Alice recalled what led to her addiction of fanfiction.

> "It was my first year in high school. I had a couple friends who were into the horror films, and I mentioned I had seen Halloween…and I told them how much I liked [the Aliens series], and they said here's a movie for you. They said you want to come along and watch and I said okay, fine."
> --Oliver, scary movies

> "My best friend at the time shoved a Backstreet Boys CD in my hand. … Before then popular music was completely outside of the scope of my interest."
> --Becky, music CDs

> "A friend was a fan and convinced me to try and read one, as I was complaining of having nothing interesting to read."
> --Alice, fanfiction

Apparently family members and romantic partners are more likely to introduce men and women to some media product interpreted as meant for the opposite gender, perhaps as that encounter is perceived as safer given the relationship with the individual making the introduction. Friends would more likely be introducing a person to something of the same gender, given the tendency for friends to be same-gender.

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<u>Surrounded by It</u>

An interesting addition to the codes reflects how the people in the interviewee's life impacted their media engagings. This code differs from the previous code as here men and women did not indicate that a specific person introduced the media product to them. Instead, the interviewee said they felt compelled to engage with a media product because it was all around them – almost as if the engaging was inevitable.

Across all four situations, there were men and women who said they engaged initially or only once because the media product was all around them in their environment. There is a sense of inevitably, that because the interviewee was so surrounded, he or she was going to have contact with the media product; it was just a matter of when and where. For Isaac, being exposed to pornography once as something meant for men occurred because it was scattered around his friend's house.

> "I went over to [my friend's] place, there was all this material…it was laying around, like the actual tapes were sitting on top of the VCR, like three or four of them, magazines were just like lightly covered by another magazine like Popular Science, something along those lines. They weren't very well covered or hidden."

Similarly for Dean, although the media product was car magazines, and it was something he routinely engaged with as it was in his family's household.

> "As long as I can remember we've just been big car people. And that's definitely a product of my environment, my upbringing, my genetics."

Although the women's magazines like Cosmopolitan were scattered around his family's household, Leo recalled how he only engaged with them for a very brief amount of time.

> "I just found one that was lying around the house. My sisters would read them in the living room or wherever."

For Barclay, it wasn't just his household, but his entire town that was into basketball; so when women's basketball began to be shown on television, it just became another part of that environment.

> "Where I grew up, basketball was king of sports. … I tried out for the basketball team and made it. … And the WNBA had just come out. It was very good then, it's not so good now… And ESPN started to broadcast women's college games…"
> --Barclay, WNBA

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While all the examples here may be men, the second type of being surrounded shows that women were as likely as men in many situations to indicate this code. However, the type was focused on how the interviewee saw that the people around them were actively engaging with the media product.

The sense is that because everyone around them was doing it, shouldn't the interviewee participate as well? For Isabel and Jeremy, this meant dealing with a roommate(s) who continually engaged with something, which they decided at some point to join in on. For Isabel, this was a documentary about brothels she only watched once, while for Jeremy it was the television series *Sex and the City*, which he never really returned to.

> "I lived with six boys last year in a house, and we had all the HBO channels…and so this was something that they regularly watched every week. And I would come home from school or wherever and it would be on and they would be watching it."
>   --Isabel, *Cat House* documentary

> "I think it goes back to living with my cousin in that apartment, because it was on cable, and he would occasionally watch it or it would just be on."
>   --Jeremy, *Sex and the City*

For Sally and Penny, they were surrounded by many people engaging with the media product, which they themselves did eventually use, and repeatedly at that. For Sally, this was her family's routine watching of NBA basketball. For Penny, while initially she was dismayed from listening to her friends discuss the magazine Cosmopolitan, she did eventually become a frequent consumer.

> "I lived with my relatives during the time and that was all they would watch during the NBA season."
>   --Sally, basketball

> "The first time I was actually exposed to it I wasn't reading it. It was in high school, and some of the other girls in my class were reading it and passing it around, talking about different things in it."
>   --Penny, Cosmopolitan

Much could be said about the fact that it appears more women were swayed by seeing other people engaging with a particular media, given the gender stereotype that women tend to be more about social interaction then men. However, men did mention this type of being surrounded as well. Overall, what is being used to compare men and women in the Summary Chart below are not these specific types of being surrounded, but the impression the interviewees had that they were

surrounded by the media product, and that this is what led to their first or only engaging with it

Went with Another

The final code discussed in this scheme carries on the theme of the engaging being due to someone in the interviewee's life. However, unlike being brought to the media product, this code reflects the interviewee's sense that if they wanted to spend time with someone, then they would have to engage with the media product that the individual was. Instead of being taken by the hand, the interviewee is knocking on the door and asking to join.

As with the Brought to It code, this code can be broken down across the four situations into with whom the person desired to spend time. For some, they engaged with the media product so that they could spend time with their families. For Ted, a brief time spent playing a video game was to bond with his older brother, while a much longer span of playing a board game was to bond with his entire family, or at least the male members.

> "My brother, it was technically his Sega Genesis, and he got it largely to play sports games. … I just saw my brother playing it, and he had friends over, and I think I played with them briefly and lost very badly. … I probably said hey can I play? … My brother is eight years older than me. And so I at that age…I still looked up to him."
> --Ted, sports video games

> "It was undoubtedly a family gathering. I must've wandered up and asked if I could play."
> --Ted, RISK board game

For Jeanne and Lana, they engaged with the media product as a way to spend more time with their mothers. However, for Jeanne, watching Lifetime movies was a rare thing, while for Lana watching Oprah has become a lifelong activity.

> "Like I said, my mom watches them…so I've seen her watching them a lot. I think I probably watched one or two all the way through with her. … The only times I have watched them is just to hang out with my mom."
> --Jeanne, Lifetime movies

> "After [my mother] had my youngest brother, she took some time off from work, and that's pretty much all she watched for awhile. …it was a way for me and my mother to bond."
> --Lana, Oprah

As with the Brought to It code, the interviewee seeks to spend more time with an individual who's gender matches the interpreted gender of the media product.

Another type of person the interviewees wanted to spend time with was a romantic partner. For Nicole and Barbara, their desire to spend time with their boyfriends led Nicole to play a video game, for a very brief time, and Barbara to become a fan of a television series.

> "I dated a guy who would get together and have LAN parties with all his other friends…they would just sit around for hours and play this game. I was the girlfriend, so I would be the one typically getting them snacks, or something like taking a nap, and I just wanted to get into it for the social aspect. So I wasn't a server, so I'd be more into it, and it looked fun."
> --Nicole, video games

> "My boyfriend watched it… We had just begun dating, and he like loved the show, and that was just a way for us to spend time together."
> --Barbara, *Lost*

Similarly for the men, Vance and Ralph, they engaged with certain media products because the women they were dating were fans of them. Vance watched a movie once and only once, while Ralph watched a series of movies, although with the same level of non-commitment that Vance showed to his movie.

> "This girl came over to my house, and we watched The Notebook, and I was just sitting there. I was counting down the minutes till it was over. I had heard all about this movie, and I finally had to watch it with a girl."
> --Vance, *The Notebook*

> "My high school girlfriend was obsessed with the Olsen twins. We watched them to make her happy."
> --Ralph, Olsen twin movies

Zane represents the men who engaged with something meant for women repeatedly, and reported a rather positive recollection of this engaging.

> "My wife and I watch TV on DVD. … It's just something that we do together, watch television in the evenings when we have time."
> --Zane, *Sex and the City*

Again, the gendering match of individual spent time with and the interpretation of the media product matched.

However, the connection to the code Brought to It does not completely hold with the final subtype of Went with Another. When the interviewees discussed who they wanted to spend time with as being their peers or friends, being able to directly classify them as men or women is not as easily inferable. Franklin discussed the

desire to watch the classic horror movies at least once so as to be able to talk to anyone about them.

> "Every person should see the classic horrors at least once so that they have some clue what people are talking about when they talk about the classics. At least, that's my opinion. I try to watch the classics of just about everything so that I can participate in conversation if nothing else."

Carla talked about spending time with her group of friends, which consisted of men and women, as the reason she listened to metal music, and ultimately did so repeatedly.

> "I had a group of friends in high school that listened to nothing but metal…I was so young and craving acceptance that I was like hey yeah sure, I'll listen to the music that these people like."

While Xavier said he watched Margret Cho's comedy once when "I was hanging out with a couple of my openly gay friends." Of all these examples, only Paige represents those whose engaging with a media product matched the gendered interpretation of that product, once the inference is made that it was women she watched the Bachelor with that one time.

> "My friends when it first came out, like when it caught on, my friends would have Bachelor parties, and I felt like I had to go if I wanted to be included…"

When it was friends the interviewee wanted to spend time with, what mattered less was the gender of the friend. Instead, the personal preferences for that media product of the friends being the same as the interviewee's rose to prominence.

Summary Chart

There are 8 categories of Why Engaged and four Gendered Media Engaging Situations in which to compare men and women. This results in a total of 32 locations in which there may be convergings and divergings. These locations have been plotted for men and women in the summary chart below. In this chart, each code is a specific color. Percentages are given only for those comparisons deemed to be divergent.

Within each situation, men and women were compared for how often they mentioned a media product that could be recorded as that specific code. This comparison happened in two ways. First, one-way analyses of variance (degrees of freedom 1, 42) were calculated for each code. Given the small sample size, any

difference significant at p<0.10 or less was considered a diverging. The size of the significance was indicated as follows: a = p<.001; b = p<.01; c = p<.05; d = p<.10.

Second, the illustrations in the summary chart were examined to find additional divergings that occurred but did not reach statistical significance due to the sample size. An illustrative difference was considered a diverging if the magnitude of one code's frequency was approximately twice that of the other or more. If there was no mention by one gender, then the other had to be at least 2%, indicating at least two separate people mentioned that code.

There are locations when either the men or the women reported a solitary mention of a code. Given the sample size, it is hard to determine if this is a pattern that may result in a diverging or a converging. As such, these discrepancies will not be included as divergings. Statistical and illustrative divergings are indicated in the summary chart as the only ones to have their corresponding percentages displayed.

Statistical. Analysis of the one-way ANOVA results indicated 6 divergings that met the criteria for significant difference listed above. Those divergings are demarcated by bold, italicized percentages in the summary chart to more efficiently demonstrate these differences. Thus, there were 18.8% of the total locations that showed a significant difference between men and women in discussing what led them to engage with the media product for the first or only time.

In Meant for Men Used Once, men were more likely to indicate having engaged with the media product because of already being with another person who engaged with it (F = 3.187, p<.10), while women were more likely to indicate having it introduced to them by another person (F = 2.802, p<.10). In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, men were more likely to indicate engaging with the media product to satisfy some interest (F = 5.473, p<.05), while women were more likely to indicate engaging because of already being with a person who engaged with it (F = 3.326, p<.10). In Meant for Women Used Once, men were more likely to say they engaged with the product because they were surrounded by it (F = 6.555, p<.01) and/or just stumbled upon it (F = 4.853, p<.05).
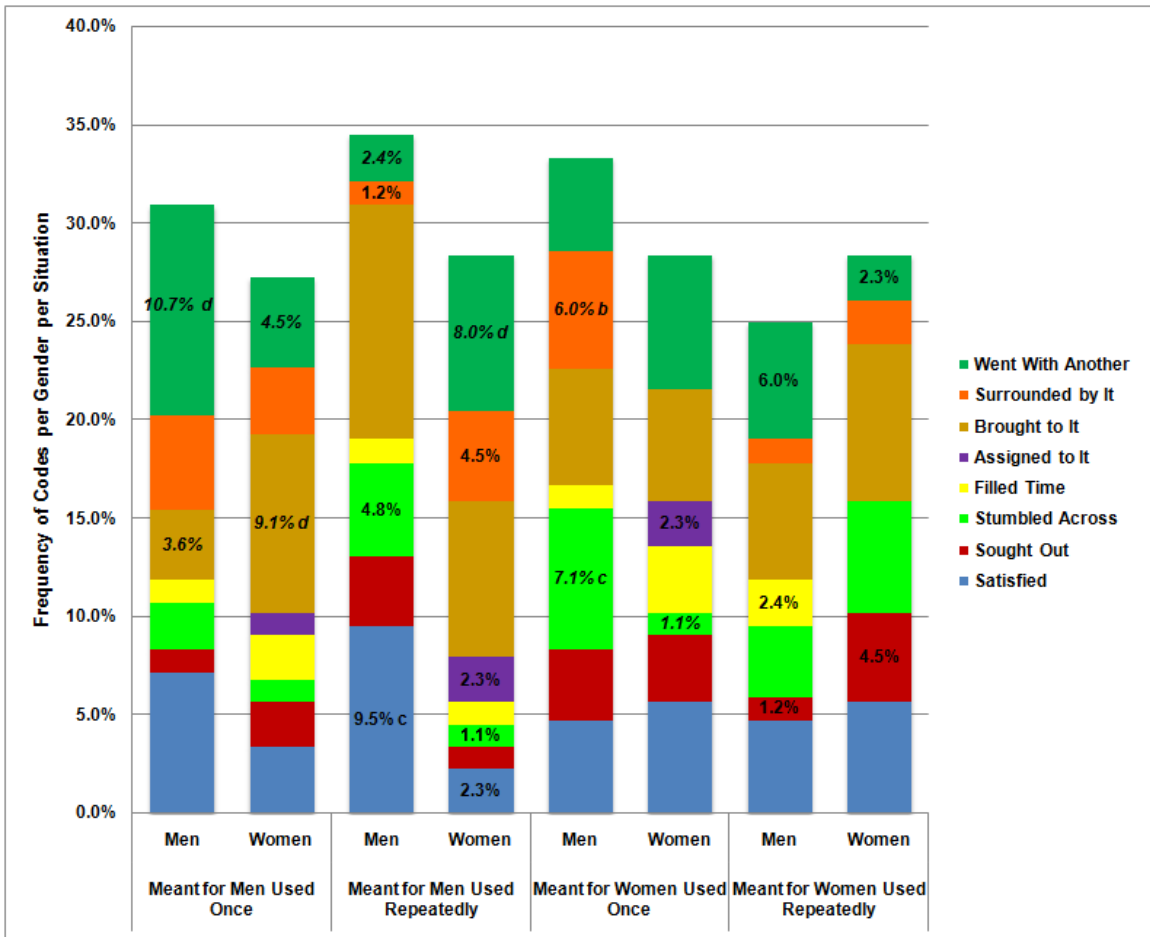
Summary Chart 6.1. Why Initiated Engaging with Media Product

Illustrative. In addition to the statistical divergings, there are 7 divergings in the summary chart that meet the criteria for an illustrative diverging. This means another 21.9% of total locations can be classified as such. In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, men appeared more likely to say they stumbled across the media product, whereas women appeared more to say they were surrounded by the media product or were assigned to do some task that involved being exposed to it. In Meant for Women Used Once, women appeared more to say that they were assigned a task that involved engaging with their chosen media product. In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, men were more likely to say that they engaged with the media product because a woman they were with was engaging with it, and/or

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because the engaging was a way of filling time, whereas women were more likely to say they sought out that particular media product.

Divergings versus Convergings. Combining the statistical and illustrative divergings results in 40.6% of the total locations showing differences in what men and women said led them to engage with their chosen media products across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. However, this means that 59.4% of the locations showed convergings, with only one converging due to the presence of no codes. Removing this code from the calculation results in 56.3% of the total locations being due to convergings on frequency of classified codes. Thus, for the most part, men and women were alike in saying they were intentionally brought to the media product by some other person, how often they sought out that particular media product, and engaging with the media product to satisfy curiosity about it.

How Volitional

As it is connected to the Why Initiated sense-making instance, this coding scheme likewise can be called a measurement of selectings. Much of uses-and-effects approach assumes that the individual chooses to engage with the media product because of what the media product will supply that is purposively and voluntarily sought out. However, with the media so entrenched in many of the interviewee's daily lives, any encounter with a media product may not be entirely volitional on the part of the individual. Indeed, as the codes demonstrate from the Why Initiated scheme, a person may engage with a media product because it was there or all around. From the individual's perspective, there may be nothing about what led to the engaging that felt like it was under his or her control.

The purpose of this coding scheme was to add this consideration of volition to the common uses-and-effects approach by directly asking men and women for each situation if they saw what led them to engage with the media product as: imposed upon them; something they voluntarily journeyed into; and/or something that just happened. Because the individual could mention any combination of these three choices, seven codes were developed. Each is represented below with examples of what men and women said beyond just "imposed", "journeyed into" and "just

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happened" to illustrate the complexities of how media engagings were initiated. Thus, only one code was recorded for each interviewee's situation.

After the quotes are given to illustrate each code, any pattern or singular finding will be highlighted and briefly discussed. After the discussion of the qualitative examples, statistical and illustrative tests are reported to highlight where men and women converge and diverge in their frequency of mentioning a particular code within a particular situation. Summary Chart 6.2 illustrates this comparison. Any discussion of comparing across situations is minimal during the qualitative section as the topic is the focus for Chapter 10.

Imposed

This code refers to one of the main choices given to individuals as a potential answer. The code reflects the sense the interviewee had that the engaging with the media product was to some degree forced upon him or her. What led to the imposition is broken down to illustrate how this interpretation works, but for the discussion of divergings versus convergings it is the interpretation that is analyzed.

Interpreting the engaging as being imposed occurred across all four situations with an overall tendency for women to report more of this sense than men. Whether it was cross-gendering or same-gendering, there were women who felt that their engaging with a media product was not completely their own choice. Such as Isabel watching the *Cat House* documentary about the brothels that one time.

> "I think that at first it was imposed upon me, because I was very uncomfortable around pornography, which all of the boys at that time knew."

And while Isabel in the end accepted the documentaries and watched the entire series, Megan represents a sense of imposition we would consider more normative; if you feel you are being imposed upon, as Megan did with her male friends playing video games, then you would be less interested to the media product.

> "It was more imposed, like I went to hang out at their house and then they would decide to play like the fighting video games and I would be there already. I would just kinda hang out while they were doing it, but I would never go over somewhere when I knew they were going to be doing that because obviously I'm not really interested in that."

However, even with media products used repeatedly, the initial engaging could have been seen as imposed upon them. Such was with Gloria, who engaged with her media product originally due to a class assignment, and Carla who felt some pressure for social acceptance involved in becoming a fan of metal music.

> "I mean I choose the class, but I didn't know that was necessarily on the curriculum, so mostly imposed."
> --Gloria, *Band of Brothers*

> "It was imposed, but I was so young and craving acceptance that I was like hey yeah sure, I'll listen to the music that these people like."
> --Carla, metal music

Moving into media products seen as Meant for Women, while not matching women, more men did say they felt imposed upon for their engaging. Representing these men is Vance, recalling that encounter with a romantic movie due to a girl he was courting.

> "It was imposed, I guess. I guess it was imposed on me. If my friend had been like, okay, I've brought over The Notebook, let's watch it, and I would've been like no, it probably would've hurt her feelings."
> --Vance, *The Notebook*

However, women were again very common in saying they felt imposed upon when engaging with meant for women. For a media product used only once, this sensation is more understandable. Jeanne feeling imposed upon as her desire to be with her mother meant having to watch television she otherwise would not.

> "Imposed, because, I mean, the only times I have watched them is just to hang out with my mom."
> --Jeanne, Lifetime movies

But feelings of imposition could occur also when the media product was eventually something used repeatedly. For Jeanne, such sensation again is understandable, as she recalled being young and watching Disney's *Cinderella* for the first time: "Probably imposed, because I couldn't do much for myself at that point." Whereas Penny, being surrounded by women talking about Cosmopolitan, in a sense felt trapped when she first encountered the magazine.

> "Imposed on me. I was just sitting there, and didn't have much of a choice but to just listen to them talk about it."

At some point then, we would imagine this feeling of imposition changed, so as to explain why the individual repeatedly returned to the media product, whether the media product was meant for men or women. Also, it is clear with these examples

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the tendency for women to report more feelings of imposition involved in their gendered media engagings, an observation partially supported by the findings illustrated below in the quantitative assessments.

Voluntary

The opposite of Imposed, this code refers to the sense the interviewee had that engaging with the media product was something the person decided on his or her own to do.   Across all situations this was the most mentioned interpretation of how the engaging came to be.

As seen in the summary chart below, for the most part men and women were equal in how voluntary they saw their engaging with media products, whether it be something they say meant for their gender or not. This includes playing video games that were seen as meant for men, if even for just one time.

> "I did it voluntarily because, like I said, computers were kind of a novelty back then."
> --Kendra, video games

> "I volunteered. I probably said hey can I play?"
> --Ted, video games

Also voluntary was engaging with something meant for men that would later be returned to repeatedly, such as playing video games or watching a sport out of love.

> "It was definitely voluntary, even if at the time I had nearly an aversion for videogames! Ah, love, what doesn't it make us do!"
> --Alice, video games

> "Definitely voluntarily. I mean I've been playing basketball since I can remember, but I can remember watching the tournament just on my own, because it was on and it was the sport I played."
> --Yuri, basketball

However, getting into experiences for Meant for Women Used Once, the picture changes slightly, as more women said they voluntarily engaged with such a media product more than men.

> "Voluntarily, because I saw other people doing it, and I was curious about it."
> --Megan, romance novels

> "I voluntarily journeyed into it, did it all for the sake of a friendship."
> --Nicole, soap operas

Of course, this did not preclude some men from saying the engaging was voluntary. Such as Isaac, who's curiosity at what were considered "girly cartoons" compelled him to seek them out.

> "I voluntarily journeyed into it, I'd have to say for that one. I journeyed into it out of curiosity."

Curiously, this hiccup in the comparison of men and women was not replicated when the media product seen as meant for women was something experienced repeatedly. Similar to the media products Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, men reported voluntary cross-gendering, from Ralph who bought his girlfriend the media product she loved, to Dean who engaged with a website important for his occupation.

> "I voluntarily journeyed into it. I actually bought a couple for her."
>   --Ralph, Olsen twin movies

> "I would say voluntarily journeyed. I clicked on the link. It's not like it just popped up. I was like oh, well, let's see what this is."
>   --Dean, fashion websites

This cross-gendering was met by women, such as Tammy seeking out teen magazines and Alice beginning her addiction with fanfiction.

> "Oh I paid for them myself, so yeah, it was all me."
>   --Tammy, teen girl magazines

> "I voluntarily read the first one. And the numerous others – addiction is bad!"
>   --Alice, fanfiction

Despite the expectation that only same-gender media engagings would have been interpreted as voluntary on the part of the individual, the presence of voluntarily engaging with a cross-gender media product appears to defy the convention.

Just Happened

This code refers to the interpretation by the interviewee that the engaging with the media product was the product of happenstance. Of being at the right place at the right time – or in some occasions involving using the media product only once, and reluctantly at that, the wrong place at the wrong time.

Of the three codes, when treated without combining with any other, this code saw the most divergings between men and women, as seen in the summary chart below. The pattern of divergings showed a cross-gendering effect. Women tended

to be more likely to say the engaging was something that just happened when they were engaging with some media product they interpreted as Meant for Men. Such as Eileen, who said both her encounters with basketball and the *Rambo* series of movies were happenstance.

> "Something that just happened. Normally my father and brothers would just watch it."
>   --Eileen, basketball

> "No one made me sit down and watch it, so it wasn't imposed. But I think it was just happened."
>   --Eileen, *Rambo* movies

Then when the media product was seen as Meant for Women, it was men who were more likely to see the engaging as something that just happened, through no fault of anyone's activities. There was Ben, who watched *Sex and the City* with his mother, and Vance, who watched *Grey's Anatomy* with a gal friend.

> "I'd say it just happened. I didn't voluntarily want to see it. I wasn't forced to watch it. It just happened."
>   --Ben, *Sex and the City*

> "Probably just kinda happened, I guess. I didn't know I was gonna watch it when I went down to her room, but we did."
>   --Vance, *Grey's Anatomy*

However, just because this trend existed does not mean same-gender media engagings were not also seen as occurring due to happenstance. Gerald did not see the beginning of his engaging with Monty Python as possibly anything but just happenstance.

> "I don't really know what just happened means, but it's definitely not the other two because it was a group thing. I probably wouldn't have watched it on my own. He brought it to me, and I kinda just watched it because it was on."

Kendra shrugged off her occasion to leaf through Cosmopolitan as having just happened, even if her later discussion of it critiqued the material.

> "It just happened. We were watching TV, and we talk about guys a lot…and we were just reading it."

The frequencies for men and women on this code will be discussed below with the quantitative assessments of the divergings. The cross-gender tendencies are of particular interest, especially when combined with codes below that include some form of the Just Happened code. Examining all of these Just Happened codes reveals an interesting pattern for men and cross-gender engagings, which will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 10.

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<u>Imposed/Voluntary</u>

The first of the combined codes, the apparent contradiction occurred because interviewees were allowed to expand their answer to all three types of responses if they felt such complexity was necessary to address how they saw the situation. Saying the engaging was both imposed upon them and yet in some part voluntary can be seen as an attempt to acknowledge that while some outside structure existed that impelled the engaging, the individual retained some level of agency in agreeing to be compelled to engage with the media product. Whether the media product was seen as meant for men or women, or used once or repeatedly, both men and women in equal numbers talked about how the engaging was to a degree forced upon them, but that they had some choice in either engaging at all or in determining how they engaged.

The most common combination of imposed and voluntary occurred as men and women felt that someone forced the media product on them, but that actually engaging with the media product was their choice. The imposition could have been direct, in that someone gave the person the media product to engage with, such as Franklin and the beginning of his encounter with a romance manga, or Isabel's one time encounter with romance novels.

> "It was forced upon me in the manner that it was dropped in my lap but then it was voluntary for me to continue it."
>   --Franklin, romance manga

> "[The romance novel] was given to me so in that sense if was imposed upon me, but then I voluntarily read the book later on…"
>   --Isabel, romance novels

The imposition could have been more indirect, in that others were doing it and the interviewee felt little choice but to go along with them. For Yuri, this imposition was subliminal, and led him to a onetime encounter with professional wrestling on television.

> "Voluntarily. Maybe I was kinda pushed into, sorta, by my friends, because I can remember they were all wearing their wrestling t-shirts, that sort of thing. … Maybe I was a little bit forced into it by them, you know, not literally forced like hey you have to watch this but subliminally, like okay I guess I'll check it out too if everybody's watching it."

While for Nicole and Isaac, since their mothers were respectively watching basketball and musicals, they repeatedly did so as well – only for Nicole, she eventually came to enjoy the experience and Isaac said he only went along out of laziness.

> "I would say it's pretty even between being imposed upon and I voluntarily did it. Whenever the game would come on with my mother's team playing we had to watch it. There wasn't another option at that point, we only had one TV in the house…but I could've done other things and not watch, but she enjoyed it. I figured if she could I could."
> --Nicole, basketball

> "Imposed out of laziness. I guess it still falls under imposed as I didn't have a choice as to change the channel or not, or turn off the VCR or not. But I did have to the choice to walk out of the room but didn't want to, felt really lazy."
> --Isaac, *Grease*

Finally, the imposition could have come from no person's direct doing; instead, the media product was just available at that time, and it was the only one available, such as Barclay's first encounter with a sports film while riding a plane.

> "You could say imposed because I say it on the plane, but on the plane you can easily just turn it off…but choose to do it because I had wanted to watch the movie when it came out but I never got to and then I had that chance on the plane."
> --Barclay, *Coach Carter*

Another type of imposition focused less on being given the media product to engage with, and more with a life situation that then led the person to choose to engage with the media product. For Tammy, she was given a school assignment, and her interpretation of that assignment's requirements led her to watch golf, which became a lifelong obsession.

> "It was a little bit of both…I could have picked anybody, but I did choose Tiger Woods, but as far as sitting down and watching golf, that was sort of a requirement – I mean, not a requirement, but something I felt in order to do the project I needed to understand."
> --Tammy, golf

Similarly, Lily was told about tryouts for *Les Misérables*, and felt that in order to prepare for it she had to see the production.

> "It was imposed and voluntary. I was told about possible tryouts, and was very interested, so I asked to see the show. But if I hadn't been told about the tryout I probably would not have seen it."

In a reversal of the previous combinations, there were those interviewees who said they were looking for some media product to engage with, but that the exact nature

of the media product was imposed upon them. While Gloria was willing to go see a movie with a date, she was not the one who chose the movie they saw, *The Notebook*: "I volunteered to go on the date, he chose the movie so that's imposed." Likewise, while Yuri was curious to find new music to listen to, it was his friend who made them listen to Norah Jones.

> "Kind of a mixture. It was voluntary in that I asked her to play some music, but it was kinda forced because she put it in, but overall voluntary because I agreed."

Across all these examples is a unifying balancing act, of people facing some sort of imposition and meeting it with some level of actual, or perceived, agency. So common was this balancing act that, as the figure below shows, there were no major divergings between men and women in the discussion of it for any of the Gendered Media Engaging Situations.

Imposed/Just Happened

The second combination code continues the seeming contradictory nature as an outsider observer would perceive. For this code the interviewee discussed how some aspect of the media engaging was imposed upon them, while at the same time some aspect of it was just happenstance. This balancing act cannot rely on the dialectical nature of structure and agency as the previous code could; which perhaps explains why, save for the code combining all three responses, this is the least mentioned of all codes. But where it did occur the most potentially illuminates what this balancing act meant to those who saw their engaging as such.

While four people did mention this code, it was the two men in Meant for Women Used Once I would like to focus on. Jeremy recalled the time he was exposed to *Sex and the City*, saying that the cousin he lived with would oftentimes watch the series. For Jeremy then, the encounter was "sort of a combination of between imposed and just happened." Similarly, Dean said his encounter with the tabloids that focus on celebrities' lives was something that just happened, except for the sense that tabloids are in places where you cannot help but see them.

> "Just something that just happened. I mean I guess you could say I gotta checkout, and to checkout I gotta walk by the rack, so I guess in some sorta bizarre twist I guess you could say I was forced into it because you have to walk by them. You don't have to look at them, but you see them."

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As seen in the figure below, it was in this situation that men were more likely than women to say their engaging was both imposed and happenstance. By itself this finding may not be that remarkable, as it was only two men out of twenty, and thus two situations out of eighty-four. However, this diverging is part of a larger pattern involving men that will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 10.

Voluntary/Just Happened

The final of the main combination codes was found across all four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. For this code, the men and women discussed how they saw some aspect of what led them to engage with the media product as being due to the fortunes of happenstance; and yet, at the same time, they to a degree were willing participants in this situation. The balancing act here is focused on the characteristic of what made the engaging happenstance, with the person's voluntary decision to engage with that media product at that time and/or place.

For some of the interviewees, their encounter with the media product was something that just happened because it was just there, at a place that they happened to be at the same time. For Alice and Ted, this meant being at a library or bookstore and just coming upon it, then deciding to give it a try, if only for just that one time.

> "It just happened, as I could have picked something else. I voluntarily journeyed into it, as I was looking to try new literary genres."
>   --Alice, science fiction novels

> "I guess it just happened, I stumbled upon it, but once I found it I wasn't opposed to reading it. It fell upon me but I didn't mind it, still volunteered for it."
>   --Ted, romance manga

For Leo, this meant being at his friend's house and finding a magazine to leaf through for that certain amount of time.

> "I would say the latter two options that you gave me. I mean it just happened in the sense that we were just sitting around my friend's room and I picked it up and was leafing through it. But that was a voluntary action."
>   --Leo, Boys' Life

For other interviewees, their chance encounter happened because it was something continually going on around them, thus providing a sense of inevitability that they would engage with it. Being surrounded in this way may also explain why Dean and

Leo repeatedly engaged with the same or similar media product; for Dean and the car magazines this engaging was more positively recalled than Leo watching musicals.

> "I guess you could say something that just happened to me. I voluntarily joined into it. But you know, it just kinda happened because it was there. The old man has five different subscriptions to these weird European car magazines and you just if they're always there, that's what you looked at."
>   --Dean, car magazines

> "It was just something that was happening among the family and I would take part. No, not at all [imposed]. They weren't like you're going to watch this."
>   --Leo, musicals

Across all these examples, the sense of happenstance was more that it was the right place for the engaging to occur, and the interviewee then decided to take advantage of that situation or to go along with what was happening.

Sensing the happenstance of a situation could also be feeling that it was the right time, that if it had been some other point of time the engaging might not have occurred. For Leo, watching *Terminator* the first time with his father was just something that he went along with when the time arrived.

> "I was those two last options. It just happened in the sense that it was spur of the moment, hey let's watch this movie, and I voluntarily sat down and watched it."

Alice only choose to give romance novels a try when she saw another woman reading them. Had it not for coming across that particular person at that particular time, she might not have had that experience.

> "It just happened, in the sense that I had not seen that girl at that point I would not have tried, and voluntarily, as I choose to try it."

As with the previous types of this combination, the opportunity presents itself, and the interviewee decided to seize it. What is not easily seen in these examples are the divergings indicated by the summary chart. With the divergings below, this code can be combined with the other codes that in some way reflect the sense of happenstance, with a pattern involving men that is discussed in Chapter 10.

All Three

The final combination code is the manifestation of all three main responses as occurring simultaneously within the situation from the interpretive stance of the interviewee. Given the interpretive balancing act necessary for such a combination

to occur, it is not surprising that only one person mentioned this was how the media engaging was interpreted. For Oliver, watching Dr. Phil's show once as something meant for women was seen as an engaging resulting from the nexus of it being happenstance, imposed, and voluntary.

> "I could easily say all of the above. Because I came home early [from work sick], I voluntarily sat home on the couch in front of the TV, and it was imposed on me because my mother wanted to watch. That was it. It was like all three of the above."

And while a single occurrence cannot a pattern make, the fact that it included the Just Happened code, and occurred within the Meant for Women Used Once situation, means this occurrence is part of the larger pattern to be discussed in Chapter 10.

Summary Chart

There are 7 categories of How Volitional and four Gendered Media Engaging Situations in which to compare men and women. This results in a total of 28 locations in which there may be convergings and divergings. These locations have been plotted for men and women in the summary chart below. In this chart, each code is a specific color. Percentages are given only for those comparisons deemed to be divergent.

Within each situation, men and women were compared for how often they mentioned a media product that could be recorded as that specific code. This comparison happened in two ways. First, one-way analyses of variance (degrees of freedom 1, 42) were calculated for each code. Given the small sample size, any difference significant at $p<0.10$ or less was considered a diverging. The size of the significance was indicated as follows: a = $p<.001$; b = $p<.01$; c = $p<.05$; d = $p<.10$.

Second, the illustrations in the summary chart were examined to find additional divergings that occurred but did not reach statistical significance due to the sample size. An illustrative difference was considered a diverging if the magnitude of one code's frequency was approximately twice that of the other or more. If there was no mention by one gender, then the other had to be at least 2%, indicating at least two separate people mentioned that code.

There are locations when either the men or the women reported a solitary mention of a code. Given the sample size, it is hard to determine if this is a pattern that may result in a diverging or a converging. As such, these discrepancies will not be included as divergings. Statistical and illustrative divergings are indicated in the summary chart as the only ones to have their corresponding percentages displayed.

Summary Chart 6.2. How Volitional Was Engaging with Media Products Seen

Statistical. Analysis of the one-way ANOVA results indicated 5 divergings that met the criteria for significant difference listed above. Those divergings are demarcated by bold, italicized percentages in the summary chart to more efficiently demonstrate these differences. Thus, there were 17.9% of the total locations that

showed a significant difference between men and women in discussing how volitional was their choice to engage with that media product.

In Meant for Men Used Once, women were more likely to indicate that the engaging was imposed upon them (F = 2.952, p<.05). In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, women again were more likely to say their initial engaging was imposed upon them (F = 4.450, p<.05), whereas men were more likely to indicate the engaging was simultaneously something that just happened and that they voluntarily did (F = 4.936, p<.05). In Meant for Women Used Once, women were more likely to say their engaging with the media product was something they voluntarily decided to do (F = 3.958, p<.05). In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, men again were more likely to indicate the engaging was something that both just happened and was voluntary on their part (F = 3.496, p<.10).

Illustrative. In addition to the statistical divergings, there are 5 divergings in the summary chart that meet the criteria for an illustrative diverging. This means 17.9% of total locations can be classified as such. In Meant for Men Used Once, women appeared more likely to say their engaging was something that just happened. In Meant for Women Used Once, men appeared more to indicate that the engaging was something that just happened, either alone or in combination with it also being imposed or voluntary – indeed, it was in this situation that the only mention of all three codes simultaneously was mentioned by a man. In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, men again appeared more to say that the engaging was something that just happened.

Divergings versus Convergings. Combining the statistical and illustrative divergings results in 35.7% of the total locations showing differences in how men and women saw their engaging with the media product as being volitional across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. However, this means that 64.3% of the locations showed convergings, with 4 of these convergings due to the presence of no codes. Removing these convergings from the calculation means that 50% of the locations had convergings due to similarities in how often a classified code occurred. Thus, for the most part, men and women were alike in how voluntarily they engaged

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with the media product, even when combined with some sense that the engaging was imposed upon them.

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS:
WHY STOPPED OR CONTINUED ENGAGING

Research questions
How men and women diverge and converge on their:

- What led to a non-continuation of the engaging, i.e. selecting to use only once

- What led to a continuation of the engaging, i.e. selecting to use repeatedly

Why Stopped/Continued

There are times when an engaging with a media product happens only once; you may only watch a movie once, perhaps when it first came out; you might only read a magazine once because of a particular article in it; you could only play a game one time, even if you haven't defeated it. Likewise, many of the engagings we have can occur over a longer span of time, and occur across different situations. What is it then that separates the media product engaged with only once, and the one engaged with repeatedly? What leads a person to stop engaging or to continue?

The goal of this coding scheme was to address this difference between stopping and continuing, as seen from the individual's perspective, as a measure of selecting – selecting to stop or selecting to continue. With being cued to think of engagings that were once only or repeatedly, the following questions were used to verify how men and women defined these situations: what led to not engage again, for the once only situations; or, what led to repeatedly engage with, for the repeated

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situations, was used to elicit how men and women defined these situations, and in what way they complied with the intentions structured into the interview.

The answers to these questions were treated as equal for the development of common themes. The understanding is that for those situations where the media product was engaged with only once, the reason for engaging was not sufficiently met to encourage repeated engagings. Every unique reason given was recorded. The codes are reported separately below, using the words of men and women to illustrate what led them to stop or continue engaging with their chosen gendered media products. As each answer for this sense-making instance could be coded more than once with a different code within a Gendered Media Engaging Situation, examples given may reflect these overlaps. Where necessary, such overlaps are highlighted to avoid confusion as to how the example reflects a given code.

After the quotes are given to illustrate each code, any pattern or singular finding will be highlighted and briefly discussed. After the discussion of the qualitative examples, statistical and illustrative tests are reported to highlight where men and women converge and diverge in their frequency of mentioning a particular code within a particular situation. Summary Chart 7.1 illustrates this comparison. Any discussion of comparing across situations is minimal during the qualitative section as the topic is the focus for Chapter 10.

Relating to Life

This first code reflects those interviewees who said the reason they either stopped engaging or continued engaging with the media product had to do with how well the media product related to how the interviewee viewed the world, reality or life, and/or what was going on in their life at the time of the engaging. In other words, how much did the media product fit in with their philosophical assumptions or their perspective on situations they had faced, were facing, or could potentially face in the future.

If the media product was something engaged with only once, then interviewees said the reason they did not seek out additional engagings was due to not seeing how the media product fit in with their life at the time. Gerald was turned

off by how an action movie's idea of reality, of what is meaningful in life, did not match his own idea at the time.

> "It's kinda the reality thing, when you realize what real life is, what really makes life meaningful, this is that sorta thing."
> --Gerald, *The Transporter*

Kendra did not see how the generalized information provided in the women's interests' magazine, Cosmopolitan, could provide her with anything useful to deal with her own life.

> "I think it's bullshit. I don't think that these editors in New York really know how to tell me to be in a relationship, or what you do in that specific situation."

Interviewees were not simply taking what they received from the media product and applying it to their own lives to attempt to see a fit. They were also drawing from their own past experiences to determine that the media product did not relate to what they were experiencing. Negotiating the meaning and attempting to fit it in with one's life resulted for those in the Used Once situations to decide there was no value in continuing their engaging.

The negotiation had a different end result for those who came across a media product and did see how it related relate to their own life. The media product may have fit as did a war miniseries for Gloria, reminding her of cherished times spent with a family member.

> "It reminds me of my grandpa and his stories. And I think that I've probably watched it more since he passed away because it's nice to have some old man tell you a story, even if it's not your grandpa."
> --Gloria, *Band of Brothers*

The media product may have just fit into what the interviewee was experiencing with his or her friends at the time. The engaging may have been woven into the fabric of the friends' relationships with each other, as was Monty Python for Gerald, or the media product may reflect what the friends do on a daily basis, as *The Hills* did for Eileen.

> "I think you also kinda buy into this Monty Python culture. The more Monty Python lines you can quote in company, the higher up you are on that totem pole. The more apt your quote is, the better."
> --Gerald, Monty Python

> "[The girls on the show] are going through like everything that my friends and I go through…so I could relate to them in so many ways."
> --Eileen, *The Hills*

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Engaging with the media product could also reflect what the interviewee was doing in attempting to structure some part of his or her life. Engaging with the fashion websites reflected Dean's attempts to develop his occupational trajectory.

> "To be able to draw from them, or learn from them, come up with a new idea, influence your creative thought process."

The same type of negotiating what "I did, do, or want to" with what the media product represents about this activity happened with these examples; only here, the media product fit in with how the individual saw his or her life at the time. A good fit meant the media product was continually engaged with past that initial encounter in which such a determination was made.

Relating to Self

Whereas the first code reflects how the interviewee sees his or her life at the time of the engaging, this code reflects how the interviewee sees his or her own self – preferences, feelings, thoughts, and so forth – and how this sense of self matches with what the media product is perceived to be offering to the interviewee.

When it came to media products used only once, men and women agreed that some aspect of the item did not match what they liked or how they thought about who they were. For some interviewees, it was a simple as saying the media product simply did not meet the criteria to be something they liked, such as Abby and Ben discussing something they saw as meant for men.

> "It was just not really my cup of tea."
>   --Abby, *The Man Show*

> "Just not into it. I'm mostly into sports video games, I played mostly them instead of the Grand Theft Auto games. It's not my style."
>   --Ben, video games

Megan and Franklin, talking about different media products interpreted as meant for men, both discussed their aversion to the gratuitous violence found in the products.

> "I hate watching people fight no matter if it's like in real life or if it's fake. I just don't understand why people get a thrill out of it."
>   --Megan, video games

> "I'm not a person who likes violence for violence's sake. … I like violence to have a point. I like to wrestling and fight, but I would never do it with the intent to hurt. I really don't like people who like to hurt people. … I like there to be a hero to stop the people like that."
>   --Franklin, scary movies

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Eileen and Yuri, discussing different media products meant for men, simply found their perspective on romancing the opposite gender not matched by what was portrayed in the media product.

> "First I watched it to pick up a few tips, but then I realized that we had two different points of view on how to get a guy to like you. I didn't see any relevance in watching that show."
> --Eileen, *Bachelor/Bachelorette*

> "Just a different music choice. Even though I don't mind the jazz genre, during this time I also got into hip-hop (Relating to Life), underground independent hip-hop, and that resonated more I guess with a younger guy not really looking for love songs, looking for love, more just a good time."
> --Yuri, Norah Jones music

The number of reasons why a person felt the media product did not match his or her sense of self can be just as varied as the number of reasons it did not relate to what was going on in his or her life at the time.

The reverse is likewise true for those who did repeatedly engage with a media product they said managed to relate to their sense of self. Still, two basic patterns emerged in how people could relate to the media products. For some, the media product fulfilled some desire they have. Whether the desire is to be different than what people think you should be, such as Lana and her use of a clothing retail website.

> "When I got the piercings, it was okay, I like deviating from the person that people assume me to be. Because when people start to assume you to be someone, that's not who you are…"
> --Lana, Hot Topic website

The desire could be for the lifestyle portrayed in the media product, as Sam suggested when talking about the liquor advertisements.

> "I enjoy looking at it, almost as much as I enjoy, the same reason you would watch Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous, because you are just intrigued with the lifestyle that someone has."
> --Sam, high end liquor advertisements

Or in a cross-gendering situation, the desire could be for the women in the media product, as Adam discussed his love for the girls on *Sex and the City*.

> "I love to see women in control and they take what they want. … They're so elegant but it's like the classic school girl that's a bad girl, like a Catholic girl that's a bad girl, that's what that show is to me. Like they're so elegant but they're bad. I love that, I just love it."

However, the interviewees also discussed being able to identify with people in their media products, in that they could see some aspect of themselves in the person, or

see something in this person that they wished they could be. For Carla, she liked how the main character of *Legally Blonde* was a strong woman who was still into fashion.

> "And she cares about shoes and clothes just as much as I do, so it sort of justifies my obsession with it."

For Xavier, he was envious of the musicians' ability to perform in front of everyone.

> "I envy their ability to go on the road and leave their families to play to crowds that can relate to them. Even getting up on stage would be a cautious move for me."
>   --Xavier, metal music

Looking across all these examples, the unifying thread is how the media product is seen as fitting in with who the person is, or who the person wants to be. Instead of looking at around the self as in the Relating to Life code, the discussions here are looking inward at the self to evaluate whether or not to keep engaging with the media product.

As with the previous code, the issue of fit dealt more with personal preferences than view of self as gendered, as fit was as likely to be an issue in same-gender as in cross-gender engagings. It is more in the quantitative assessments below that the frequency of mentioning either type of fitting as it relates to gender becomes more noticeable.

Preferring the Content

As seen in the summary chart below, this code was the most commonly employed to answer why the person either stopped or continued engaging with the media product. The commonality of this code is understandable given what it reflects. To be included here, men and women had to basically indicate how much they liked or disliked the content of the media product; was the media product they preferred to engage with repeatedly, or was it something they did not prefer to spend more time with.

For those media products engaged with only once, saying the content was unfavorable and even criticizing it were quite common. Reacting to the content unfavorably ranged from seeing it as insipid to some degree, such as Deanna and the men's magazine, Yuri and professional wrestling, and Sally and soap operas.

> "I read it once and I kinda saw how lame and condescending it was…"
>   --Deanna, Maxim

> "Just realizing that it was kinda dumb. It really wasn't intelligent programming."
>   --Yuri, World Wrestling Federation

> "It's way over dramatize and unrealistic."
>   --Sally, soap opera

Jeremy in discussing why he never returned to watch more *Sex and the City* was very specific about the aspects of the show that were unsatisfactory.

> "I don't like the characters, I don't think they're necessarily good people. I don't like the whole relationship aspect, that really turns me off. … Sarah Jessica Parker. I don't know what's wrong with her, but it seems like from the inception of the show her hair was really bad. Just looking at her hair was enough to make me not want to watch the show."

For some, pointing out the media product's flaws were not enough. Their reason for disliking the show was connected to some criticism of the media product's role in society. Chad criticized the violence of football when he referenced that it should not have any place in a civilized society, "It's boring and a manifestation of an antiquated world." Adam was dismayed by how the reality program *The Hills* represented the focus of modern pop culture on celebrities, who were not the best role models for society's youth.

> "Because every show is the same thing. A bunch of girls sitting around a coffee table…and they're always with their Gucci glasses, their huge bags, their couture whatever, living that life of fame. The cult of the ego and the cult of the celebrity has gotten to a level in this country that this is the pinnacle we've come to."

Whether the reaction the content was simple boredom to intellectual dismay, the end result was the same; it was not a media product the person decided to make a more fixed part of a personal media environment.

However, when the media product was something returned to repeatedly, whether same-gender or cross-gender, the number of reasons for why the media content was preferred were as numerous as the people who answered the question this way. From *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* to *Sex and the City*, men and women said that they liked the characters and the storylines in the media products.

> "First of all, I loved all their personalities, and they were all different, and they all played like a certain role in their group, and their friendship… I love the set-up, like how they lived down in the sewer, that was something different compared to the rest of the cartoons at the time. It seemed like that cartoon thought outside the box a little bit."
>   --Megan, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*

> "I thought it was suspenseful. I thought it was funny. And the science fiction part of it was just sort of interesting, because they talked about topics I had never really heard anyone talk about."
>   --Gina, *The X-Files*

> "It was awesome good guys, bad guys, and absolutely no diplomatic solution. Followed by explosions and angsty flakes of spice."
>   --Chad, *Digimon*

> "The storytelling and the character development are just really, really good. They just made some really compelling characters. … And the storytelling was just of a high enough caliber. All the characters were real, the situations they got into weren't really like make-up, formulaic…they were really interesting stories, where different things happened, and there was kinda something new to learn about it."
>   --Zane, *Sex and the City*

Men and women also commented on how there was something intrinsic to the construction of the media product that caught their interest. For Kendra, she saw the reality program *Rock of Love* as an interesting social commentary.

> "The girls are crazy, and it's interesting to see what they will do, what they won't do. It is a sick and twisted social experiment that we just like to watch."

For Dean, the best car magazines are the ones with good writing, and those are the only ones he'll repeatedly engage with.

> "I enjoy very good writing. … The good writing is what kept me coming back to certain magazines."

While for Becky, online dating sites have been interesting for their own intrinsic value: "Novelty. I'm sure the novelty will wear off in a month or so." Regardless of what it was about the media product that interested the person, those who repeatedly engaged with the item were unanimous in that the engaging, as Becky put it, "pushed every one of my kink buttons." For some people, perhaps not every "kink button" was pushed, but enough were to turn the single encounter into a continual engaging.

Sensing Appropriate

For this code, men and women discussed the extent to which they felt it was appropriate for them to continue or not continue with the media product. Of all the codes created for the answers to this question, this code was the least employed. Similar to the Why Initiated code Hearing from Others, only women discussed this

reason in the situation Meant for Men Used Once, while men and women were equal in using this reason when the situation was Meant for Women Used Once.

For women in both of the situations, one of their main concerns was believing someone did not want them to continue the engaging, or even being told the media product was not something for them. Gina might have liked to watch her Barbie movie another time, but she was afraid it would harm her relationship with her older brothers.

> "I only watched it because [my grandmother] bought it for me, but I didn't want to because I was into really boyish things with my brothers. So when I watched it they sorta made fun of me, and that's why I only watched it one time."

One the other hand, Lana and Deanna were both very aware that a family member did not want them to continue engaging with the media product. Lana's time playing a video game ended because of her brother, while Deanna's consumption of a magazine prompted her mother to put an end to it.

> "It's one of those saved games, you save your progress but you don't want to save it on top of somebody else's progress. My brother is always afraid I'm gonna save mine stuff on his. So he doesn't want me to play it as often as I liked."
> --Lana, video games

> "My mom didn't want me reading it. … She thought I was too young."
> --Deanna, Bop! Magazine

However, the interviewees also derived their sense for what was appropriate based on general notions for that is expected of men and women. Here the concern is not so much what any specific person did or may do, but on the potential social stigma attached with a cross-gender media engaging.

> "When I see girl watching basketball, I see her as a tomboy. To me, I would not be as shocked seeing a girl watch soccer. But to me basketball is like only a male kind of sport."
> --Eileen, basketball

> "I think that just having developed my beliefs that it was for women was really problematic for me. Because like I think it's normal for men to have issues with gender, kinda. Like in high school, the insult was always don't be a woman or something like that, or you're such a girl if you're scared to do something like that, and I guess those things kinda like prevented me from wanting to look even deeper into Sex and the City to see if I liked it."
> --Ben, Sex and the City

Overall, the concern for appropriateness was higher for women than it was for men, as men were only concerned about their actions in relationship to engaging with

something seen as meant for women, which led them to only use that media product one time.

<u>Reacting to It</u>

The code Preferring the Content focused on the evaluations the individual made of the content of the media product, where evaluations were seen as the thoughtful recollection of what was liked or disliked. This code, Reacting to It, contains an affective dimension, as it asks how did engaging with the media product make the person feel. Did they have a positive experience engaging with the item, or was it overall just negative? This code was second most in frequency, after the Preferring the Content codes.

Media products that were used only once, whether meant for men or for women, were often led to an engaging that left the interviewee feeling indisposed toward the item. For some, the negative feeling was some level of irritation over the content of the media product or the engaging itself.

> "I thought it was stupid. And I watched the second one, it made me even more irritated at the films."
>   --Gerald, *The Transporter*

> "I didn't like the idea of killing yourself like that…I didn't have a very positive feeling after reading the whole thing."
>   --Kaitlin, *Romeo & Juliet*

For others, the negative feeling was more visceral, producing some level of discomfort during the engaging process.

> "Overall it still made me uncomfortable even though I think I did learn a bit from it, and so just that probably level of awkwardness didn't encourage me to go back and bother watching anymore."
>   --Isabel, *Cat House* documentary

> "It made me feel gross. I couldn't relate to it, I thought it was over the top and stupid."
>   --Nicole, soap operas

For still others, the experience, or something related to the engaging, was so negative that the memory of it is not a good one.

> "Just because the girl I watched it with I don't talk to anymore. We kinda ended on a bad note. I guess if I watched it again, it would bring back some bad memories."
>   --Vance, *The Notebook*

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Whether it prevented moving on with the media product from that point, or even wanting to go back to it at some later point in life, the remembrance of the negative reaction was preventing men and women from further engaging with media products, even those that they saw as meant for their own gender.

For those media products discussed as repeatedly returned to, it was the positive remembrance of the media product and/or the engaging process that helped fuel the desire to continue the engaging. The warm feeling toward the media product for some was built upon how funny the item was to them.

> "It's funny. I enjoy the show that surprisingly I thought I had no connection to and find ridiculous. It amuses the hell out of me. Teri Hatcher's character actually just randomly comes up with, her lines are just hilarious at times."
> --Paige, *Desperate Housewives*

> "It was also funny! It had good jokes that were worth waiting through 15 minutes of angst for."
> --Chad, *Notting Hill*

For others, it was the exact opposite; instead of it being funny, it was the tension created and then released during the engaging the prompted them to return for more.

> "I think that for some reason I just get an adrenalin rush when I start to get towards the scariest part of the movie, and I like, I don't know why, the feeling of being scared awhile afterwards, even if it's not wanting to move an inch because I'm scared."
> --Lily, scary movies

> "It is extremely exciting, I mean, just countless games go right down to the buzzer. For whatever reason, it's always in the tournament that the games are enormously entertaining. And every year it's always the same, great, great, tournament. The adrenalin, just watching it is unbelievable, especially when you have a team that you want to win, especially if your team is down to the wire, you keep coming back – it's like a drug almost."
> --Yuri, basketball

While for others, the engaging was just a fun thing to do in their daily lives.

> "It was just fun, a nice fantasy. I think it's natural for little kids and adults to want to have some sort of fantasy they can disappear into on occasions."
> --Jeremy, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

> "Well, that was like starting the funnest time ever of my life, and so I just associate that music with having tons and tons fun."
> --Carla, metal music

Whether the engaging was same-gender or cross-gender, a positive reaction to that initial encounter can help the individual make the determination if they want to continue engaging with the media product. Along with the high number of Preferring

the Content code, as seen in the figure below, neither of these codes had any divergings within the situations. Apparently, if the media content is favorably received, then it will not matter who it is meant for; that the individual concerns of a pleasant experience can outweigh concerns of inappropriateness.

Deciding to Spend Time

When faced with the time requirement for engaging with a media product, the interviewee will have to make the choice as to whether or not the engaging would be worth this investment. This code reflects this decision, whereas the determination of the worth could be covered with various other codes in this scheme, such as Preferring the Content and Reacting Well. Because of this code's overlap potential with others, it was quite often mentioned, as seen in the figure below. However, it also shows a pattern of divergings that transcends three of the situations, which will be discussed below.

First, as with the other codes, those media products engaged with only once, whether cross-gender or same-gender, were deemed to not be worth the time investment necessary to continue with the engaging. For some, the verdict was that there were better things to do then engage with this media product.

> "My humble opinion is that there are betters things with my time I could be doing."
> --Dean, video games

Penny demonstrated how this judgment of wasted time was coupled with a Preferring the Content statement.

> "I thought it was really stupid, and thus I had lost a good hour of my life for nothing."
> --Penny, Jackass

Lily was dismayed that if you missed a week with a soap opera, then the time needed to understand what was missed was not worth the investment.

> "I feel that if you missed a week you could still catch on, but it wasn't as intriguing…"

For others, the decision was easier, as the situation in which the media product was needed was concluded.

> "I got my car, I was done with my car research."
> --Sally, car magazine

> "I guess that one time was enough. It was just that one time with my dad that I probably won't forget, to watch Animal House. It wasn't a thing that needed to be watched again. Being in college, you watch a movie like that, and you're experiencing it every day."
>   --Vance, *Animal House*

Still others did not receive anything of value from that initial encounter, and did not see how future engagings would result in the gaining of anything useful.

> "Most of the stuff about relationships, dating, and just being able to hold a conversation were things that I had already gathered. The stuff about how to please a woman in bed was good information, but I don't need to read it again and again."
>   --Sam, Cosmopolitan

> "These shows, while they can be on, I am rarely actively engaged in watching them. … After the first one, it was nothing that I was, or had sat down to watch again. I don't pay attention to them."
>   --Elliot, parenthood shows

Whether or not the decision was made for them by the situation or something they made based on their reaction to the media product, what could be gotten from any further engaging did not weigh in favor of repeatedly returning to it.

For those who did return to their media product at least once more, they did find some value in the product to judge it worthy of the additional time spent engaging with it. A basic reason is the pleasure of wasting time, such as Jeremy, continually playing the computer game *The Sims*. However, the most common reason related to how addictive the media product was seen.

> "Well, as an adult I still find serial media incredibly addictive. I love waiting for my next installment. As a kid, I always loved to read, and read everything."
>   --Elliot, comic books

The nature of the media product captures the interest of the interviewee, dangling unknowns in front of him or her and leaving questions that require further engagings in order to answer.

> "I really want to see what happens. It's kinda like a puzzle…a puzzle show where everything just comes together in the end. And I think that's why I just keep going back, I'm just very interested as to why all these mysterious events occur."
>   --Barbara, *Lost*

> "So it's a different story every time and you never know how the story's gonna turn out."
>   --Franklin, *Dungeons & Dragons*

> "Mostly the plot, like the plot always gets you on any show really, you just want to watch to see what happens next."
>   --Megan, *The Hills*

If these questions do not provoke enough interest, for a myriad of personal reasons, then the interviewee most likely decided finding the answers was not worth the time investment, resulting in the used once situations. As seen in the figure below, for men more than women did the cost-benefit question appear more fundamental, even when they were engaging with some media product interpreted as meant for their own gender.

<u>Being Able to Engage</u>

After Sensing Appropriate, this code was the least referenced by men and women in describing why they stopped or continued their engaging with their discussed media product. This code reflects how much the person felt they would be able to continue the engaging. The reason for this interpretation could be the individual's own personal ability, or could be due to some external factor, such as having the time, the money, or the access. As seen in the figure below, this code appears in some way the opposite of the Deciding to Spend Time code, which will be discussed below.

First, for those who said they only engaged with the media product once, feeling they were able to do so ranged from personal competence to financial considerations. For Becky, the issue with playing video games is a common ability challenge many researchers claim is a reason women play these games less than men.

> "My hand-eye coordination or patience is not strong enough to warrant slogging through hours of game play for a story."

However, Ted said he did not play football video games more because he did not know the jargon necessary to play football, which made playing the game difficult.

> "I wasn't into sports, I didn't understand sports at the time. And so playing a game based on it didn't make any sense to me. It was like reading another language."

Albeit for a different media product, this was a sentiment shared by Chad, who found the cartoons meant for girls to be like a foreign language when he was a boy.

> "I didn't enjoy it due the alien quality of the show, it was the difference between boys and girls that you don't understand when you're a kid."
> --Chad, *My Little Pony*

For others, the issue was more or less out of their control, as some external factor was seen as preventing them from any further engaging. For Kendra, this was access to the computer game, while for Kelvin it was not having the time to play the video game again;

> "We just didn't have those games on [my family's] computer. I never encountered it anywhere else. I don't know if it's that I would never have played it again, it's that I never got the chance to play it again."
>   --Kendra, video games

> "Just one straight run-through because new games come out, I always get them, and I never have really the time go back and play the old ones as much as I'd like."
>   --Kelvin, video game

Then for Becky, a lack of finances and time prevented her from listening to more pop music CDs.

> "Pure and simple finances, I couldn't afford to buy crap I wasn't going to listen to. And time – I had to still listen to rehearsal CDs while I drove between school and dance and voice classes and show rehearsal."

Whether it was seen as a lacking in the self when confronted with the media product, or a lacking in what the world around would allow, cross-gender and same-gender engagings suffered under some lack of being able to engage.

The issue of being able was more common when the media product was only used once. The question of being able was not as discussed when the media product was engaged with repeatedly. When it was discussed, the focus was most commonly on what the individual was able to do that helped the engaging, or how the engaging helped them in some other way. For Tammy with golf and Alice with fanfiction, their ability to respectively understand the sport and write such material prompted them to perpetuate the original engaging.

> "Like I said, I think in order to enjoy any sport you have to understand it. I spent a lot of time understanding it…"
>   --Tammy, golf

> "I liked the unlimited reading supply. And the fact that I could write."
>   --Alice, fanfiction

Whereas Deanna liked how the video game *Mortal Kombat* gave her a chance to show the men in her life that she was able to be just as good as them.

> "I really just liked trying to beat them, like I can play it now with my boyfriend just because I just want to try to beat him and show him I'm better than him."

Oliver, in his cross-gender encounter, discussed how engaging with the cookbook *Joy of Cooking* allowed him to be able to learn how to cook better than anything on television could.

> "As I've said before, to help myself. If I want to learn to cook something right, it gives you the basics, so that's where it's most helpful. Instead of winging it, or watching a TV show and hitting rewind all the time, at least here I can look at words and rely upon that."

The curiosity of how being able was more of a concern in the Used Once situations compared to these of the Used Repeatedly highlights a pattern involving gender. More women than men indicated consistently this concern over being able, with the most concern highlighted in both Used Once situations. This pattern will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 10 when the entire coding scheme is discussed.

Being with Other(s)

The final code for this scheme showed interesting cross-gender divergings, as highlighted below. The code reflects men and women discussing the reason for their continual engaging as being in some way able to spend time with someone who was engaging with them. If the media engaging was not going to have someone joining them for the experience, then the person saw no further need to engage with that media product

Thus for any media products used only once, men and women alike, either felt that there was no one to join them in the engaging, or that the engaging was not a necessary component for spending time with someone else. For Lily and Kelvin, they could not find anyone to watch their respective movies with them, both of which were cross-gender engagings, and so haven't had any reason to go back and watch the movie again.

> "I guess I liked it enough, but it wasn't something where I knew other people wanted to see it and I could see it with them, or would just sit and watch it by myself, because I don't generally do that anyway."
> --Lily, action movies

> "Why I haven't been forced to see it again, and I never will be willing to see it again."
> --Kelvin, *The Wedding Date*

From Elliot's standpoint, continuing to watching professional wrestling was not necessary as he had other ways of spending time with his friends.

"It wasn't fulfilling in and of itself. And the camaraderie of watching it with the boys wasn't sufficient either; we did other stuff together."

Gina, on the other hand, wanted to spend time with her brothers, and to do so she had to give up doing girl-oriented activities like watching the Barbie movie.

"I didn't enjoy it because I was more involved with my brothers. … I liked hanging out with them and I wanted them to like me because I was the youngest, so I just gave it up."

Only Elliot did not have gender issues enter into his decision. Lily and Kelvin were engaging in a cross-gender, and could not find someone of their own gender or the opposite gender to engage with them. Gina was directly faced with gender when she felt her brothers would not watch the "girly cartoon" with her.

In a similar way, the discussion of being able to find someone to engage the media product with was similarly gendered when the item was used repeatedly. For those interviewees engaging in a cross-gendering, having someone of the gender the media product was seen as meant for engaging with them apparently helped to prolong the encounter.

"My brother is very much into soccer, and all my male friends… Sometimes I will just get to watch with them when I am hanging around with them."
  --Kaitlin, soccer

"I've just been in situations where I'm around women who watch it, and that I'd be with it I guess. I haven't really turned in on ever…it's just that if women are around I'll have to watch it."
  --Vance, *Grey's Anatomy*

However, when the engaging was same-gender, this issue of the gender of the person to engage with was not as important. Ted was able to play the RISK board game with his family and friends, most of whom were male: "Had a fun time, something to do with people." Watching the Disney movies was something Sally had in common with her friends, presumed to be girls, who watched the same movies, meaning for Sally "That was what I would talk about with my friends." Looking across all the situations then, it does appear that if having someone to spend the engaging process with matters to the person, then the person was looking for someone whose gender matched that for who the media product was meant.

<u>Summary Chart</u>

There are 8 categories of Why Stopped/Continued and four Gendered Media Engaging Situations in which to compare men and women. This results in a total of 32 locations in which there may be convergings and divergings. These locations have been plotted for men and women in the summary chart below. In this chart, each code is a specific color. Percentages are given only for those comparisons deemed to be divergent.

Within each situation, men and women were compared for how often they mentioned a media product that could be recorded as that specific code. This comparison happened in two ways. First, one-way analyses of variance (degrees of freedom 1, 42) were calculated for each code. Given the small sample size, any difference significant at $p<0.10$ or less was considered a diverging. The size of the significance was indicated as follows: a = $p<.001$; b = $p<.01$; c = $p<.05$; d = $p<.10$.

Second, the illustrations in the summary chart were examined to find additional divergings that occurred but did not reach statistical significance due to the sample size. An illustrative difference was considered a diverging if the magnitude of one code's frequency was approximately twice that of the other or more. If there was no mention by one gender, then the other had to be at least 2%, indicating at least two separate people mentioned that code.

There are locations when either the men or the women reported a solitary mention of a code. Given the sample size, it is hard to determine if this is a pattern that may result in a diverging or a converging. As such, these discrepancies will not be included as divergings. Statistical and illustrative divergings are indicated in the summary chart as the only ones to have their corresponding percentages displayed.

Statistical. Analysis of the one-way ANOVA results indicated 5 divergings that met the criteria for significant difference listed above. Those divergings are demarcated by bold, italicized percentages in the summary chart to more efficiently demonstrate these differences. Thus, there were 15.6% of the total locations that showed a significant difference between men and women in discussing why the media product they chose was gendered.

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In Meant for Men Used Once, women were more likely to say they stopped engaging because they were not able to continue (F = 6.088, p<.05), whereas men indicated deciding they did not want to spend the time to engage more (F = 4.485, p<.05). In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, women were more likely to indicate they continued engaging because they were able to be with others while doing so (F = 3.326, p<.10). In Meant for Women Used Once, men were more likely to indicate they stopped engaging with the media product due to deciding to not spend time with it (F = 3.992, p<.05), whereas women said they stopped engaging because they were unable to continue for some reason (F = 2.952, p<.10).
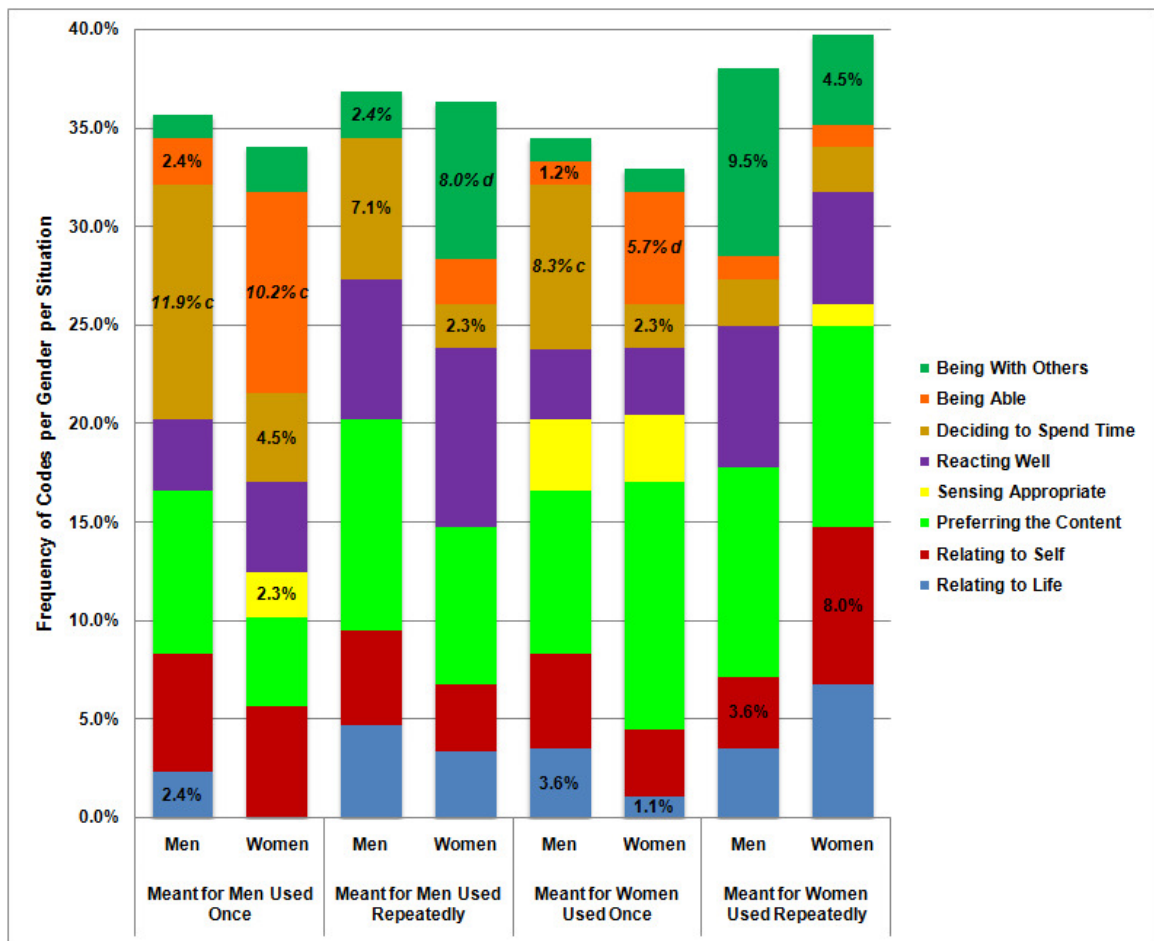
Summary Chart 7.1. Why Stopped or Continued Engaging with Media Product

Illustrative. In addition to the statistical divergings, there are 7 divergings in the summary chart that meet the criteria for an illustrative diverging. This means 21.9% of total locations can be classified as such. In Meant for Men Used Once, men appeared more to say they stopped engaging as the media product did not relate to how they saw their lives, whereas women indicated not sensing that it was appropriate for them to continue. In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, women appear more likely to say they continued because of being able to do so, whereas men indicated more of a decision to spend their time in engaging with this media product. In Meant for Women Used Once, men appear more likely to have said they stopped because the media product again did not relate to their lives. In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, women appear more to have said they continued the engaging because the media product related to how they saw themselves, whereas men said they continued more because of being able to spend time with others while engaging.

Divergings versus Convergings. Combining the statistical and illustrative divergings results in 37.5% of the total locations showing differences in what men and women said led them to either stop or continue their engaging with their selected media product across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. However, this means that 62.5% of the locations showed convergings, with only one converging due to the presence of no codes. Removing this converging from the calculation results in 59.4% of the locations having a converging due to similarities in codes. Thus, for the most part, men and women were alike in how well they reacted to the media products, how much they preferred the content of the media products, and how much the media products related to their sense of self.

CHAPTER 8

RESULTS: HOW ENGAGING HELPED

Research question

How men and women diverge and converge on how they saw engaging with the gendered media product as being helpful in their lives?

How Helped

Part of the assumption of the uses-and-gratifications approach is the idea that what is selected to be used is done because using it will gratify some need the individual has (Rubin, 2002; Ruggiero, 2000). The previous three sense-making instances reflect this selecting aspect as they attempt to explain why the individual engaged with the media product for a period of time; however, they did not address the idea of the "need" driving the selecting. This coding scheme reported here measures more the utilizing of a gendered media engaging to help the interviewee in his or her life. This help can be said to be based on a need, or desire, but this drive is not fostered wholly by intrinsic motivations, arising out of personal traits and preferences. Instead, it is more likely the need arises from the interaction of the sense-making individual with the structure of a situation.

The analysis reported in this section pertains to a coding scheme developed using Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology. In SMM interviews, there is a question prompting a person to discuss what helped him or her to move through or deal with the situation being faced (Dervin, 2008). Over the years, the responses to this question have resulted in a coding scheme to categorize the ways whatever was

mentioned helped the individual. Dervin and Song (2005) analyzed this focus in regard to how media products helped people, and in doing so they drew analogies to uses-and-gratifications' claims that the reasons people use the media is for the gratification of some need that can be attained because of that use. In other words, a need arising in a situation and subsequently gratified is interpreted by the individual as being helpful in that situation. As with the other sense-making instance schemes, the focus was not on *what* helped but *how* it helped. Still, as the help was utilized by the person in their lives, means that how the engaging helped can also be seen as a what – the nature of the help was the way in which it was utilized to deal with the situation.

What is reported here is how, in each Gendered Media Engaging Situation, the individual saw that media product as being helpful in dealing with what was happening in his or her life at the time of originally encountering the media product. The question was directly asked for each situation – how engaging with that media product helped in that situation – and the answers to this question served as the primary location for coding development and analysis. However, an additional location was utilized due to its conceptual similarity to this question: did you learn anything, be inspired by this engaging. While serving as the primary locations, helps could be found at any point in the situation's discussion as a reference to how the media engaging related to everyday life. These other locations were only considered if the situation did not contain any answer to the two primary locations.

Across all these potential locations, only unique helps were recorded. What is reported below is each type of help with examples from men and women within each situation to illustrate how engaging with gendered media products helped. Every unique help mentioned was recorded. As each answer could be coded more than once with a different code in the same situation, examples given may reflect these overlaps. Where necessary, such overlaps are highlighted to avoid confusion as to how the example reflects a given code.

After the quotes are given to illustrate each code, any pattern or singular finding will be highlighted and briefly discussed. After the discussion of the qualitative examples, statistical and illustrative tests are reported to highlight where

men and women converge and diverge in their frequency of mentioning a particular code within a particular situation. Summary Chart 8.1 illustrates this comparison. Any discussion of comparing across situations is minimal during the qualitative section as the topic is the focus for Chapter 10.

Got Pictures, Ideas

The code refers to the person indicating that he or she received help or assistance in the situation in the form of some type of information. Across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations, men and women said their engaging with their chosen media products helped them gain various types of information, each of which are illustrated below with examples. However, the main analysis of this help, as seen in the summary chart below, focuses on the interpretive process of seeing the gaining of such facts, ideas and insight as helpful.

The first type of information men and women said were usefully received from their media engagings was practical facts; the attainment of knowledge that could at some time be applied to some task in their lives. As something seen as meant for women and used only once, Elliot received some information about childbirth from watching parenthood shows, information that was useful for his own children's births.

> "There are always some practical things that you learn about…problems of troubled pregnancies, and that can have some educational content, likewise the process of delivering a child, and I'm sure we watched these before we had our first daughter, so I mean there's a certain amount of knowledge to be gained. I can't cite anything specific, but I'm sure there was some level of that interest."

Yuri, who is interested in pursuing advertising as his occupation, said that continually reading magazines women commonly read, such as People, is a way to get to know how to advertise to them.

> "Reading this magazine helps me see what women are interested in, and kinda they how think."

In a broader sense, a second type of help provides information for dealing with life, but it is information that cannot be applied directly to any specific task. Instead it is an idea for how to handle potential future situations. Vance said he learned something about what to expect in college from a movie meant for men that he only watched once with his father.

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"It showed me what I could be dealing with."
    --Vance, *Animal House*

"It helped me to realize no matter what you want to do, if you work hard you can do whatever it is you set out to do."
    --Yuri, basketball

Both of these types could be also called information about life, whether it was dealing with a specific task or life itself. Only the best examples were chosen to be reported here; thus, the lack of examples from women should not be taken as an indication that no women mentioned a Got Pictures, Ideas that would meet this type of information.

The third main type of useful information can subsequently be broken down into smaller subtypes. Gaining insight, without indicating that it would be applied to some aspect of life, was found to occur for the interviewee's own self, other people, and various things in life. From watching soap operas once, Lily said she learned what type of acting she does not want to do, but in her continual engaging with *Les Misérables* she's discovered an altruistic side to herself.

"It just made me realize it wasn't necessarily the type of performing I wanted to do."
    --Lily, soap operas

"It helped me to realize throughout life that no matter what happens there's still people that have if off a lot worse."
    --Lily, *Les Misérables*

Various people received insight into the people around them from the media products they engaged with. Jamie said a cross-gender media engaging with video games, even just played once, helped her gain insight "to understand more what boys like, what they're into." Other insights were into people in general. From Yuri, who in listening to Norah Jones' music once realized that female musicians can be as talented as male musicians.

"It helped me to realize that everyone can have talent no matter what the gender."

For Adam, his repeated engagings with either a masculine reality show or the feminine *Sex and the City* gave him insight into the workings of people he meets every day.

"I realized that there are human beings out there that are evil. Before I watched this show, I thought the Judeo-Christian principle that everybody's good, inside

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they have good. And when I saw this show I realized there are people out there that maybe they have that good, but damn they need to find that good…"
    --Adam, *Flavor of Love/Rock of Love*

"What it helped me was to see how things were changing, and how once again media can have amazing effects on human beings but this time a really good effect."
    --Adam, *Sex and the City*

For others, the insight gleaned from the engagings was into the media themselves. Oliver found out there was a variety of worthy graphic novels to spend time with, while Eileen learned the true nature of movie-making.

"It also made me realize there is good stuff to read as well as crap."
    --Oliver, graphic novels

"It made me realize that what was shown in the movies was sometimes computer animated, it wasn't real."
    --Eileen, *Rambo* movies

As seen in the figure below, this help was only one of two that were consistently across all Gendered Media Engaging Situations without any divergings. This is largely due to getting such information as being a foundation to other types of helps. Oftentimes in life we gather information to help us decide what to do next, to learn who is there to help us, to learn how to control our lives, and so forth. All of these various other helps constitute the remaining twelve codes in this scheme.

Got Directions

For this help, men and women indicated that what was received from the media engaging provided insight into the possible paths that could be taken, the directions that are available to move into, the choices that are out there. As with Got Pictures, Ideas, the exact types of Got Directions can be broken down into the potential choices the individual was considering at the time of engaging with the media.

One such type of getting directions focused on deciding what to do, whether at the time of the engaging or for the foreseeable future. Franklin was glad to have *Dungeons & Dragons* to play, as it gave him something, anything, to do.

"It gave me something to do so that I didn't go cabin fever crazy, in my little nowhere town."

Even though she only played them that one time, Megan learned that she could find playing video games fun in the future, while Ralph learned from his single encounter with a women's fitness magazine techniques he could use with future female clients.

> "Actually helped me open up my eyes to other video games accepted that I have accepted in my life as being fun."
>   --Megan, video games

> "Variations of exercises. It's one thing to understand and have knowledge of training – biomechanics and all that anatomy – but it's another to be creative with the exercises."
>   --Ralph, women's fitness magazine

Other people found potential ways to handle their lives, from a general sense of dealing with whatever challenges they come across to specific ideas about what they want their lives to be. Watching professional wrestling once helped Yuri learn the value of always looking for the alternatives.

> "I guess it helped me take a second look at things and decide how much value is there in this."

Watching Oprah repeatedly, especially when she was young, helped Lana form a sense of the type of person she wants to be.

> "I was trying to figure out what made me special, or what makes a person special, and I think in a sense I was also trying to figure out what type life I wanted for myself."

This was sentiment echoed by Gloria, only it came after a dismal encounter with the romance *The Notebook*: "It helped me know that's not who I want to be with…" For Becky and Dean, repeatedly engaging with a media product they saw as being meant for men gave them a sense of what they would like to do in their lives.

> "It helped me solidify my goals in life. I was floundering and unsure what to go to University for, what to do with the rest of my life. This gave me a direction, a goal, a hobby…"
>   --Becky, *Stargate SG1*

> "I guess in that era of my life, that little time frame, it helped me get a direction in design. And then eventually help me divert away from what it originally helped me do. At that time I was just trying to figure out what I wanted to do, where I wanted to take my life. And becoming interested in the design helped me decide to take a step in that direction."
>   --Dean, car magazines

Ben received a similar "eye-opener" about what he would like to integrate into his life, only his involved a media product he saw as meant for women.

> "It opened up my eyes to the music world. … I think it was the start of another appreciation in life."
>   --Ben, The Backstreet Boys

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For Sally and Sam, their solitary engaging with a media product meant for men helped them to finalize the question they were facing in their respective situations: for Sally, it was what car to buy; for Sam, it was what college to attend.

> "Help me to have an idea what kind of car I would like to have."
> --Sally, car magazine

> "I guess it helped me because it developed the original list of colleges I wanted to go to, showed me what I wanted in a college."
> --Sam, college admissions materials

For these men and women, same-gender and cross-gender media engagings, even if that engaging only occurred once, were helpful in that the engaging provided some sense of the possibilities that are out there. Such help provides an orientation, and could allow the individual to take that first step down a path toward some goal.

Got Hows, Methods

For this code, the individual has gathered the sense of what direction, what path, he or she would like to or has to walk down. What is needed then is a sense of how to do this, how to move forward in a way that will eventually lead the individual to a successful resolution.

The most common type of "how-to" people mentioned was to learn how to deal with people in their lives, from people they knew to people in general. Although she only engaged with the Maxim magazine one time, Deanna said it did help her talk to her boyfriend about a delicate subject.

> "It did help me talk to boyfriend more about sex and stuff, that I could bring it up in a way that wasn't so direct."

Barclay's agreeing to watch Lifetime with his mother helped him help her; he said it helped him make her happy.

> "I guess it made my mom happy. That I was willing to watch something that she liked with her. … Always good to make your mom happy."

For others, engaging with their media product gave them some ideas about how to deal with people they may meet in their lives. For Kendra's sole encounter, this was men; for Ted and Lily and their repeated encounters, this was anyone.

> "I'm really passive/aggressive with men. It's probably what I think is part of my problem. And just understanding that that is the problem is kind of a step forward."
> --Kendra, Cosmopolitan

> "I guess it gave me more social interaction skills, let me start connecting with people more, start to see how things operated."
>   --Ted, RISK board game

> "I did learn just to find out more about people before you become too close, don't believe everything they say…"
>   --Lily, scary movies

Other interviewees said they learned how to deal with the challenges life may present to them. Oliver's single encounter with *Friday the 13th* helped him learn how to deal with peer pressure, while Adam's continual experience with *Sex and the City* helped him be a better person.

> "I mean, outside of putting me wise to peer pressure, no. … It made me more cautious in what I said yes to."
>   --Oliver, scary movies

> "It helped me be more open to human beings being themselves."
>   --Adam, *Sex and the City*

For the final type of help, interviewees said they learned how to handle a specific task, even if it was not one specific to the situation that involved the media engaging. From his onetime encounter with *Apocalypse Now*, Zane learned a potential way to tell stories, which he saw as his life's work.

> "I think it helped me to learn just a little bit more about what you can do telling difficult stories."

Gina's "how-to" was more existential, as her engaging with Women's Health magazine gave her some sense how to be mature: "It gave me new information on how to be more like a woman." Across all of the different things learned, the unifying thought focuses on the idea that the individual on some level sensed the need to learn how to do something. Even if this sense was not a driving force, compelling the person to engage with the media product, something about the engaging provided the individual with an idea of how to do what they needed to do at that moment, or felt they would need to be able to do sometime in the future.

Got Support

   In this code, men and women discussed how engaging with the media product enabled them to get closer, to form a stronger relationship, to someone in their lives. Across the Gendered Media Engaging Situations, who the interviewee felt closer to depended on the type of media product engaged with.

Whether the engaging was same-gender or cross-gender, if the media product engaged with was seen as meant for men, then the person the interviewee felt closer to as a result was male. Even the short time playing a video game helped Nicole feel closer to her boyfriend: "For the half an hour I tried it, it helped me get closer to said boy." Ralph, in a similar type of media engaging, was able to feel closer to his brother as a result of playing video games together.

> "I spent time with my brother. Now I feel that it was good to have a close relationship with someone like that, especially your brother, I know a lot of brothers who don't get along too well, and we do, so that was good."

According to Vance, before heading off to college, that one time *watching Animal House* "…got me closer to my dad, too." Elliot saw being able to share a repeated media engaging useful in developing bonds with friends in a new town.

> "If anything, comics were a solid basis for growing closer to a couple of friends with the same passion."
> --Elliot, comic books

Thus, to get closer to the men in their lives, both men and women found that engaging with a media product seen as meant for men to be useful platforms to forge or strengthen this relationship.

Naturally, then, the reverse was true for media product interpreted as meant for women. Although Kelvin did not enjoy his one time with a certain romantic movie, he said it did help with his girlfriend.

> "Even though I didn't like it, it probably helped build a relationship with my girlfriend at the time."
> --Kelvin, The Wedding Date

Similarly Franklin, who only watched the "girly cartoon" once, found that it helped in his relationship with his sister.

> "I helped me spend time with my little sister, who for whatever reason liked it. Just getting closer to her."
> --Franklin, My Little Pony

When it came to something repeatedly engaged with, Gloria found soap operas helped her relationship with her grandmother, while Vance found that watching a primetime drama helped with his gal friend.

> "[Watching the soap] started Grandma and I growing closer, something we could share that makes us more friends, not just grandmother and granddaughter."
> --Gloria, soap operas

> "I guess it kinda got me closer to my friend. She's a really cool girl, and if stuff happens, I can always call her up and if I need anything, she's always gonna be there."
>   --Vance, *Grey's Anatomy*

As has been seen with other codes in other coding schemes, when the help deals with human beings, the assumptions about gender filter in. If a media product is interpreted as meant for a specific gender, then it would be seen as a potentially useful way to engage with people of that gender. The gendered media then serves to facilitate interpersonal relationships of a gendered nature.

Got Human Togetherness

Along with the previous code, this code reflects the interviewee's desire to engage with human beings, but in a different way. Here the desire is to know that we are not alone, to form a bond with others going through what we are going through by sharing similarities. Unlike the previous code, Got Human Togetherness did not break down so easily along the gender division.

For the most part, when the engaging was with a media product meant for men, men and women discussed how the engaging helped them form this bond with the men in their lives. Video games helped Carla share an interest with her boyfriend, if just for that brief time she played them.

> "[My boyfriend] wasn't a very talkative fellow, so we really had to do things more than talk to each other. We had to share the same interests, and engage in the same sort of activities. So me engaging in something he spent a good fifty percent of his day doing sorta brought us a little closer."

Barclay's decision to go see a sports movie was also a way to help him connect with potential guy friends.

> "It was sorta something to do with the guys. …It helped me a lot because it was my freshman year…I was constantly looking to meet different people, establish friends, like most freshmen do."
>   --Barclay, Friday Night Lights

Sally received a similar help, which was involved in her repeatedly watching basketball: "I was more connected to boys, we have a common interest." We could assume Elliot similarly was talking about connect with men from his one encounter with professional wrestling, given the gendered interpretation of the media product, but his discussion was far more generalized then either Sally's or Barclay's.

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> "Being able to discuss WWE made me slightly more plugged in to the cultural conversation. … It added a conversational touchstone to my repertoire."

And although Ted said most of the people who played RISK in his family were men, he did not specify these people when talking about bonding over repeatedly playing the game.

> "It helped me started connecting to my family. It didn't really last because then I got to the angsty teenage years and had to hate my parents for at least two to three years. I think it's written somewhere, a contract."

However, Carla made it clear in describing her group of friends that it was a co-ed clique, one that bonded over their affection for metal music: "Yah, [the music] was like the grease that got me into their group." While the majority of the time the person may find it helpful in bonding with the men in their lives, the gendered nature does not preclude using it to bond with anyone. As long as the affection for the media product is the same, as in the repeatedly used situations, those who share the affection could be men or women.

This same pattern was found in the media products meant for women situations, although logically reversed. Although Nicole did not like watching the soap opera with her sick friend, she felt it was important to do so, in case their situations were ever reversed.

> "It helped me make my friend feel better (Got Hows, Methods) by watching it with her… Because if I was in her same situation, I would want her to do same thing…make me feel like I wasn't all alone and lonely."

Similarly, Paige did not like *The Bachelor*, but that one time she watched it made her feel more connected to women who had gone through what she had.

> "Other women are being degraded by men, but they're doing it on national television. I don't have it as bad. … The guys would talk about the other girls behind their backs—some of the similar stuff that was occurring with me, so I didn't feel as bad about what was occurring with me."

For Henry, what began as a way to connect with his mother watching the Food Network led to a much longer engaging.

> "And then I had that connection with my mother via food. I guess it's a point of mutual interest or interest I may have originally sought out to make mutual interest and now I'm just interested."

Gerald also found that engaging repeatedly with a drama seen meant for women was a good way to bond with his sisters.

> "Maybe it's better to be with my family than not. Better to do something together than nothing together. … And I guess I showed some level of connection with them, my sisters, by watching it with them."
> --Gerald, *Dr. Quinn Medicine Woman*

As with the meant for men situations, interviewees said they connected with people other than men when the media product was seen as meant for women. Watching *Desperate Housewives* proved a way for Paige to bond with her boyfriend at the time, whose secret affection for the show was revealed to her.

> "It helped me relate to that guy because then we started watching it together all the time, and we had more to talk about than we already had to talk about."

Thus, in a way similar to the media products seen as meant for men, those meant for women are most commonly seen as useful in forming bonds with the women in the interviewees life. However, this does not preclude the possibility of bonding with men, as long as the man shares the affection for the media product. Given the reduced tendency for men to engage with media products for women, much less freely admit to it, it may be harder to find such bonding occurring over these products than it would be to find cross-gender bonding over meant for men products.

Got Centered

For those men and women who indicated that engaging with the media product helped them establish control over themselves, such as reducing the stress they felt, that help was coded here. Feeling centered also included feeling at peace with oneself, being able to reign in some perceived overly emotional state. Both of these types of feeling centered occurred across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations, whether same-gender or cross-gender.

Both men and women said engaging with their chosen media product was a way to relieve the stress accumulated in daily life. Even engaging with something once could produce this effect, as Xavier recalled his encounter with the news story about Senator Hillary Clinton drinking beer while campaigning to be president: "It made me laugh after a stressful day." More often, it was something repeatedly engaged with that helped the interviewee unwind. For Penny, reading the Lord of the Rings novels provided that escape to help her distress.

> "It gave me an escape (Got Rest, Relaxation, Escape). It just gave me a way to calm down when I would get upset like teenagers do."

While for Jeremy, watching *Star Trek: The Next Generation* provided the same respite: "It was also a welcome release to whatever stress I had from school or at home." For these interviewees, the relief felt was due to the escapism afforded by engaging with the media product.

Relief was felt in other ways involving the media product. For some, the relief came from seeing something in the media product that removed the discomfort of dealing with some aspect of their lives. Eileen found that in her life, filled with cultural strife and terrorism, knowing the *Rambo* films weren't real gave her hope that the rest of the world was not as scary as her country.

> "So then I wasn't that emotional. I was relieved that this wasn't really happening in another part of the world."

Carla was worried she was not being feminine enough, but her onetime experience with soap operas helped her alleviate that concern.

> "As a woman there is pressure to like certain things and be involved in certain things…and for me I guess I felt pressure that maybe I should like soap operas, something women do. And the fact that I learned that it's not for me, I can breathe a sigh of relief now."

Similarly, Sam felt better about himself in comparison to others due to his repeat engaging with a cable network he saw as meant for women.

> "It just reinforced, like I was very happy with myself for having tried something new and accomplished it. Because a lot of people talk about how diverse they are, and how they are always willing to try new things, but then again you don't really do that. I kinda saw myself that way. But then I just went out and did that and was like hey this is pretty cool."
>   --Sam, Bravo Network

With hindsight, Gloria's short experience with pornography helped her see her decision to end her relationship more justifiable.

> "At the time it was just another argument. But [boyfriend's] actions around the whole situation definitely made me think why we don't work together as a couple…the more proof you have, the better you feel about the decision."

For both Ted and Xavier, a onetime encounter with something they saw as being meant for women helped them feel more comfortable going against social norms.

> "It made me feel more comfortable to share time with my gay male friends, and ignore my other friends' negative conclusions."
>   --Xavier, Margret Cho comedy

> "It made me more comfortable with doing things outside the norm."
>   --Ted, romance manga

Across the situations, there are examples of both men and women who could receive some type of respite from both types of gendered media products. Indeed, as with Got Pictures, Ideas, this help was the only one to be found consistently across all situations as not having any divergings, as illustrated below.

Got Started, Motivated

Many men and women said engaging with their discussed media product helped to motivate them, to inspire them to move forward on something, to give them confidence to take that next step. These discussions were coded here as the help Got Started, Motivated. These had to be that a journey was undertaken because of the engaging.

Across the four situations, men and women discussed how engaging with their media products gave them confidence, either in a general sense to do more in the future, or in regards to moving forward to a particular goal. For Deanna, during her formative years, the help gleaned from one encounter with a teen magazine was basic self-confidence: "I think it just helped give me more confidence in myself." Sam saw his continual exposure to certain lifestyle advertisements to inspire him to do more with his own life.

> "It helped me to kinda want more, I guess. And I think at this point I'm pretty confident that I can go out and become independent on a minimum level, but the advertisements kinda inspire me. Like well I can work harder and achieve higher goals than that, and maybe actually become a more of a figure in society rather than just somebody who's sustaining himself."
> --Sam, high end liquor advertisements

Similarly, although she had a negative reaction to the romance novel she read once, Isabel still found the experience to be motivating.

> "By preserving the idea that I wanted to be more than just someone that fell in love and whatever, it encouraged me to do more things, to be more proactive in the roles that I had, and not to be I guess intimidated by male leadership, that if something was more male dominated I could do it just as much."

More common was for the media engaging to in some way motivate the interviewee to move forward down a particular path to a specific goal. Kelvin's goal was to design the video games like those he played, even if he could only play through them once.

> "As said earlier, these games helped inspire me to be a video game creator…put the idea in my head and move on it."

For others, a repeated engaging helped encourage certain hobbies, from Isabel with football to Chad and his art.

> "That encouraged me to keep up with the teams, follow sports more. I played sports when I was in high school. That probably is all connected."
> --Isabel, football

> "It helped empower me to take action with my work, with a new dedicated focus."
> --Chad, *Digimon*

And a cross-gender encounter with a romance manga, repeatedly engaged, even helped Franklin gather confidence when it came to the realm of romance.

> "Other than just the encouragement to try and be my best and some girl will like me, even for my defects, was encouraging. More confidence in myself."

Inspiration, confidence and motivation came in many forms, and from both same-gender and cross-gender media engagings. While there was a slight tendency for men to be more inspired by meant for men media products, and women from meant for women media products, the summary table below illustrates only one substantial diverging.

Kept Going, Made Progress

Men and women had their helps coded here if they discussed the sense of being able to keep moving down a path that perhaps they were stalled on for some reason. The help came in the form of feeling reinvigorated to continue moving forward toward a goal that some work towards has already been completed. This includes being reaffirmed that the movement is the right thing to do that that time.

Men and women saw how their gendered media engagings, both cross-gender and same-gender, provided the type of motivation to keep moving forward with whatever it was he or she had been doing. For some interviewees, this inspiration was applied to general actions the person was taking in his or her life. Isabel found her onetime encounter with romance novels helpful as it reaffirmed her belief that women can be more than what she found in these books.

> "Other than kinda preserving the idea I had that women were more than falling in love and whatever. And following along with the characters in the book, I thought women strike out of that and do more with their lives."

Jamie found a similar help, but hers was a far more positive encounter with romance novels; instead of showing her the opposite of what women could be, Jamie found in romance novels the inspiration that a good man could be out there for her.

> "I guess it made me hopeful, made me hope and believe there are men out there who are romantic, and that one day I will find someone special for me, and I could have a romance story like you have in these books, have it for real."

For other interviewees, an encounter with a media product helped them make progress towards a specified end result. Ben's repeated engaging with *Sportscenter* was seen as a way to help him stay active: "It helped me to appreciate sports more. … It's kept me in some shape..." For Dean, finding fashion websites has helped him keep on his occupational path.

> "It has kept my interest from waning, which is an issue I have dealt heavily within the past, when it comes to sticking with something."

While this help was not frequently mentioned by men and women, as seen in the figure below, it does show signs of cross-gendering as well as evidence of more stereotyped same-gendering. Most likely the occurrence of this helps code is more dependent upon the nature of the situation being faced by the individual at the time of the media engaging. If the individual is not already moving towards some desired goal, then a media engaging would likely not be able to help them continue to do so.

Journeying Got Easier

For this code, men and women had to indicate that the actions being undertaken to move toward some goal were made easier to handle due to the addition of some factor. Thus, similar to Kept Going, Made Progress, the individual had to describe moving toward a goal, and that engaging with their chosen media product was seen as facilitating this movement. As with the code Reached Goals, this was the least reported helps by the interviewees.

The only discussions that could be coded here were reported when the media product engaged with was interpreted as meant for men. The help was not immediately applicable to the situation being dealt with, but was considered as useful for making future situations easier to handle. Kendra did not see how her one time playing the computer game *Doom* was helpful to her at the time, but in the larger sense if made the future easier.

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> "Maybe make me a little more proficient with other computer games, if that can even be considered to be a helpful thing, I'm not sure. I guess overall, because technology is taking over, learning how be proficient in any way with computers is good thing for me to develop because we've come to be so dependent on them."

She said something similar when she started to watch all the *Godfather* movies, although with somewhat more immediate results as she was dating at the time.

> "It's easier to flirt with guys, if know what they like and how to talk about it in a way that's flirtatious and not nerdy."

For Jeremy it was more complicated. His single encounter with the men's general interest magazine, GQ, left him wishing he was more like the men in the magazine to help with his life.

> "You look at material like that and you kinda-- I kinda wished I was more like that ideal male type. It would just make life so much easier."

These three quotes represent the entirety of those interviewees who said that in some way they were helped, or wanted the help, that would make life's journey easier. Because there were only three, the diverging analysis below cannot be applied to this sample, but it should be pointed out that one person, Kendra, accounted for two of the occurrences. This illustrates the potential for a person to be seeking the same help across different situations, or at the time of the interview seeing how these different situations provided the same help.

Got Control

A quite frequent helps code, men and women here discussed their sense that some situation, seen as unmanageable, became more under the person's control. Either the situation was occurring at the time of the engaging, or the engaging provided an example of what type of negative situation to avoid in the future. In either manifestation, the interviewee discussed how what was seen as negative became under the person's control and potentially far more positive.

A major way the interviewees discussed gaining this control was by understanding better the situation they faced. For some, this meant having better insight into the people around them so as to understand why they did what they did. Lana learned more about her brother and herself by playing *Splinter Cell* for that brief period of time.

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> "It helped to kill a certain curiosity that I had about myself, and even a little curiosity I had about my brother. I always tried to figure out why he was so rough and tough, and always liked to play these games that involved such violence."

While Gloria received more insight into why her father acted the way it did, and thus more insight into their troubled relationship, due to repeatedly watching *Band of Brothers*.

> "Watching war things in generally helps me understand aspects of the men in my family. I know that there are people who shut down, can't talk about what happened, and that makes it more acceptable for me for my dad to be like that."

Although Eileen did not agree with what she saw in reality dating programs, her onetime encounter with them did help her deal with her boyfriend.

> "At least with my boyfriend, see where we stood… It helped us be open about our feelings…so I had that assurance. And he was always telling me about how he felt about me, so from that day on because before I wasn't sure. So then from that time on we stood, that gave us a clear vision on how much we meant to each other."
>   --Eileen, *The Bachelor/Bachelorette*

Jeanne's repeated cross-gendering with ESPN helped her formulate a sense of self during a time when she was negotiating sociocultural expectations.

> "It maybe just helped me to realize that I did not need to live the stereotype, that I didn't have to always like girly things…just figure out who I was, and knowing that I could like what I like…"

Interestingly, most of the people who said they got control by understanding the people they were dealing with were women.

Men, on the other hand, were more likely to see control by understanding the factors creating the immediate situation being faced.

> "I was in a new environment, and I couldn't understand why we had to move, so I had to look at the world around me and figure out why things were way were. That helped me understand why things were the way they were a little bit better."
>   --Franklin, *Dungeons & Dragons*

> "It helped me to make sense of the world at the time."
>   --Gerald, Monty Python

> "It helped the world make sense. If people are just weird then the dilemma of love is weird and as such has no longer logical solution, which is what seemed to be."
>   --Chad, *Notting Hill*

This tendency reflects the gender stereotype of women being more focused on social interaction than men; in this case, how to improve their social interaction with others, even if it means negotiating who you are, as in Jeanne's case. Men, on the

other hand, are stereotypically more prone to controlling their environment, and understanding why the situation is the way it is can be the first step towards this control.

However, Chad's case somewhat dispels both stereotypes, in that his repeated engaging with a romantic comedy led him to learn about the people in the world around him. An example from Gloria further confuses this gender divide. She said in a time of instability, like Franklin's, what she needed most was a friend, a common feminine concern, which she found with her grandmother while watch *General Hospital* repeatedly.

> "I needed a friend. We had just moved, I needed some stability. You have to reach out for something, something has to be solid when lots of things in your world are changing."

Again, most likely how the situation is being dealt with determines what type of control is sought, rather than the gender of the person facing the situation.

There was more equal gender distribution when it came to seeking control by avoiding future negative situations. That is, engaging with some media product only once, typically one meant for the opposite gender, was useful in giving a sense of what not to engage with in the future. This was Kelvin's concern, after watching The Wedding Date, as it "helped me not waste my time in the future." Isaac combined Kelvin's sentiment with the common male fear that being caught watching something meant for women would be detrimental to his standing with his male peers.

> "It kept me from getting made fun of, kept me from watching things that could have made my school life a little bit worse than it already was."
> --Isaac, girlie cartoons

However, other interviewees also found help from the engaging that could be applied to other aspects of their lives. For Lily, her onetime watching soap operas helped her learned what type of acting she did not want to do.

> "It just made me realize that even though I knew I didn't want to do those [types of performances] to begin with, it was an x off my list of options (Got Directions), so it helped me so that I wasn't steering in wrong direction."

For Yuri and Gerald, their same-gender engagings gave them a taste for how not to conduct themselves in the future.

> "It helped me not to accept everything for what it was. Not taking things as I'm forced fed. So if I hear something on the news, maybe that's not the way it really

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is. Or if someone tries to teach me something, maybe they're wrong and I should decide for myself."

--Yuri, World Wrestling Federation

"It was and still is an example, kind of a benchmark of something not necessarily to strive toward but strive away from in certain ways."

--Gerald, *The Transporter*

Whereas something repeatedly engaged with could help the person understand more about the situation being dealt with, something engaged with only once appears more useful in steering the individual away from an unfavorable repeat. Also, the inclusion of Lily in these examples, when combined with the previous discussion about Gina and Chad, highlights that gender equality can be more attainable when what is used as the basis of comparison is the action of seeking to control rather than the type of control sought.

Reached Goals

As mentioned already, this was one of the least mentioned helps code. To be coded as discussing this help, men and women had to mention actually having accomplished a journey by reaching the goal at the end of the path due to the gendered media engaging.

Such finalization is understandably rare, and only three occasions were found that could be coded as this help. For one, Chad, he only saw this help in hindsight, as his onetime encounter with football "helped me to grow into the progressively ideal person I am." Both Megan and Sam said that their engaging with something meant for women did help them accomplish something. For Megan, it was getting "over the hump" of reading a romance novel: "It just helped me do one more thing that I wanted to do in life." Sam's accomplishment was more involving, and he credits watching the Bravo cable network for getting him there.

"It was over the summer, we did a whole pork roast over the barbeque. I had never done anything more than burgers, like quesadillas or something on the grill. And I did that, and it was…a pretty cool accomplishment when it was all done because it was like wow, I cooked something that like wasn't just a hamburger."

As with Journeying Got Easier, these few codes do not allow for the type of divergings analysis present below. The quotes do indicate the ability for same-gender and cross-gender media engagings to help people realize some goal in life,

even if it's something as seemingly basic to the outside observer as picking up a book or cooking a roast pig.

<u>Got Rest, Relaxation, Escape</u>

This helps code addresses a common reason for engaging with media product: diversion from everyday life or other activities that are not as desirable at that time. However, in the words of the men and women, this help expresses how they received some rest from the world, without that rest having to do expressively with getting control over themselves or their situations.

Across the situations, the relaxation could have been just for that, without saying the relaxation came from escaping from the specific situation being faced at the time. Such was the case for Ben, who recalls listening to The Backstreet Boys' music whenever he just needed to relax.

> "I like to listen to music. So anytime I put something on it was kind of like an escape almost…it was entertaining to listen to, relax for a day or two."

Kendra found a similar help with a dating reality program, *Rock of Love*, as she said it was helpful to just shut down her brain.

> "It just gave me that mental release from thinking about intellectual things all the time. It was stupid, and I knew it was stupid, and I just had this outlet to sit there and be a zombie for a few hours and take it all in."

Ted mentions escapism from reading his romance manga *Angelic Layer* for a brief time, but it was not escaping from anything specifically happening to him at the time: "Same thing with most fictions, I could get lost in the world." Following Ted, there were interviewees who mentioned how the media engaging allowed them to escape the situations they were directly facing, and in escaping find rest. For Carla, this came from her brief time watching soap operas, while for Vance his continual listening to Dave Matthew's Band helped him manage his teenage years.

> "To alleviate boredom at my grandmother's house, certainly."
>   --Carla, soap operas

> "I was dealing with a lot of issues, I was growing up…I pretty much just had to like grow up. I needed something that I could be strong in front of people but I needed something off to the side where I could just relax, hang out. I guess it's one of those growing up things."
>   --Vance, Dave Matthew's Band

Curiously, as seen in the figure below, no one mentioned this help when the media product was Meant for Men Used Once. Across the other three situations, however, there was evidence of this help coming from both same-gender and cross-gender engagings. Thus this help could be found whether the engaging was with something the person had affection for, such as music, or something to take the person's mind off the situation being faced.

Got, Felt Pleasure

Finally, for those interviewees who said basically the engaging made them feel good, this code was for them. This code includes discussions of how the engaging was cathartic, how the interviewee felt better because of the engaging, whether or not he or she felt bad before the engaging.

Both men and women indicated that they felt better after engaging with their discussed media product for the first or only time. For Vance and Ted, they only had to engage with their media product for a short time to have this effect.

> "It helped me because maybe I had a bad day and wanted a laugh. It gave me a good laugh and was funny."
> --Vance, *Animal House*

> "It was cathartic. I could cry a little. I could be happy."
> --Ted, romance manga

Jamie, Ted and Chad said that repeatedly engaging helped them to become happier people, if only for a little while.

> "It probably made me more happy. The more I watch it I would get in a happy mood."
> --Jamie, *Barney*

> "It did make me very happy, it was better than being depressed."
> --Chad, *Digimon*

> "It made me happier, even if just for a time."
> --Ted, *Beauty and the Beast*

Finally, for Jamie, the content of the talk show she watched once was not the impetus to her better mood; instead, it was the idea fostered by watching The View.

> "Other than probably making me happy that women were able, were given this air space, and were able to talk about these issues…"
> --Jamie, *The View*

Similar to Got Rest, Relaxation, Escape, there were no codes that could be applied to discussions in the Meant for Men Used Once situations. Additionally, women

showed a slightly greater tendency to indicate being happier after engaging with media products Meant for Women. This tendency may reflect the stereotype that allows women to be more expressive of their feelings, either within the media engaging situation or within the interview situation, especially as they are triggered from feminized media products.
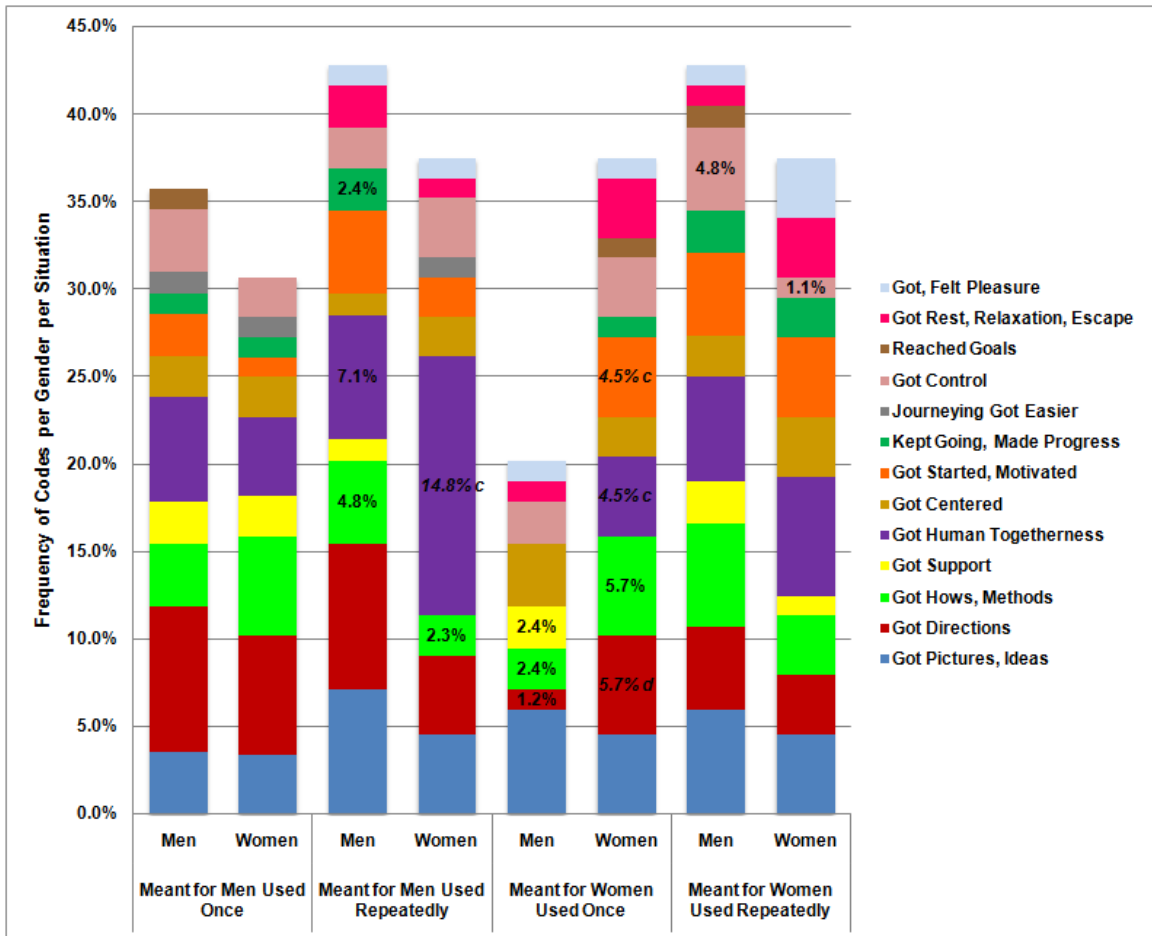
Summary Chart

There are 13 categories of How Helped and four Gendered Media Engaging Situations in which to compare men and women. This results in a total of 52 locations in which there may be convergings and divergings. These locations have been plotted for men and women in the summary chart below. In this chart, each code is a specific color. Percentages are given only for those comparisons deemed to be divergent.

Within each situation, men and women were compared for how often they mentioned a media product that could be recorded as that specific code. This comparison happened in two ways. First, one-way analyses of variance (degrees of freedom 1, 42) were calculated for each code. Given the small sample size, any difference significant at p<0.10 or less was considered a diverging. The size of the significance was indicated as follows: a = p<.001; b = p<.01; c = p<.05; d = p<.10.

Second, the illustrations in the summary chart were examined to find additional divergings that occurred but did not reach statistical significance due to the sample size. An illustrative difference was considered a diverging if the magnitude of one code's frequency was approximately twice that of the other or more. If there was no mention by one gender, then the other had to be at least 2%, indicating at least two separate people mentioned that code.

There are locations when either the men or the women reported a solitary mention of a code. Given the sample size, it is hard to determine if this is a pattern that may result in a diverging or a converging. As such, these discrepancies will not be included as divergings. Statistical and illustrative divergings are indicated in the summary chart as the only ones to have their corresponding percentages displayed.

Summary Chart 8.1. How Engaging with Media Product Helped

Statistical. Analysis of the one-way ANOVA results indicated 4 divergings that met the criteria for significant difference listed above. Those divergings are demarcated by bold, italicized percentages in the summary chart to more efficiently demonstrate these differences. Thus, there were 7.7% of the total locations that showed a significant difference between men and women in discussing how their engaging with their chosen media products helped them in their everyday lives.

In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, women were more likely to say the engaging helped them to bond with other people ($F = 4.272$, $p<.05$). In Meant for Women Used Once, women again were more likely to say the engaging helped them bond with other people ($F = 4.450$, $p<.05$), as well as helping them get motivated ($F = 4.450$, $p<.05$) and get some sense of what direction to go ($F = 2.952$, $p<.10$).

Illustrative. In addition to the statistical divergings, there are 5 divergings in the summary chart that meet the criteria for an illustrative diverging. This means another 9.6% of total locations can be classified as such. In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, men appeared more likely to indicate that the engaging helped them to determine how to do something and how to make some progress in some part of their lives. In Meant for Women Used Once, men appear more likely to say the engaging helped them have a closer, more supportive relationship with a woman in their lives, whereas women appear more likely to say the engaging helped them determine how to do something in their lives. In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, men appear to indicate receiving more help in getting control of some negative situation, such as learning what not to waste time with again in the future.

Divergings versus Convergings. Combining the statistical and illustrative divergings results in 17.3% of the total locations showing differences in how men and women saw their engaging with media products as being helpful across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. However, this means that 82.3% of the locations showed convergings, with five of these convergings being due to the presence of no codes. Removing these convergings from the calculation results in 73.1% of the locations having a converging due to a similarity in how codes were classified and counted. Thus, for the most part, men and women were alike in how their engagings were helpful for getting ideas, directions to go, how to do something, and a sense of centeredness, motivation, relaxation and control.

CHAPTER 9

RESULTS: HOW SAW GENDER

Research question

       How men and women diverge and converge on how they saw gender as balancing the relationship between men and women in their gendered media engaging situation?

How Saw Gender

       The final coding scheme measures an interpreting aspect of engaging with gendered media. As discussed in the Why Gendered coding scheme, I did not impose my own definitions of gender on the individual via the interview structure. As the approach to understanding gender is interpretive, it was necessary to include in the interview locations that would allow the individual to speak about how he or she understood gender to be operating within the Gendered Media Engaging Situations. Later qualitative analyses will utilize this coding scheme to explore how views on gender interact with other sense-making instance in a media engaging to impact the process and ultimately the outcome of that engaging.

       For this analysis, the purpose of the coding scheme is to describe the various ways men and women interpreted, understood and/or theorized what is the appropriate balance between men and women as it related to the other sense-making instances. This coding scheme was accomplished by examining the answers to secondary questions that occurred with each of the primary Sense-Making Methodology questions within a situation: how did the answer to this primary

question relate to their sense of what is appropriate for men versus women? These follow-up questions were attached to the questions already discussed in the other coding schemes, as well as all the remaining questions not analyzed in this study. In other words, how did the interviewee see the balancing act between men and women as related to some particular aspect of the situation, such as a question, a help, a learning, a sense of self, etc. These follow-up questions tally to nine locations for coding.

Unlike the How Helped scheme, which also applied throughout the entire interview, every mention of a How Saw Gender code was recorded; if the same code was repeated in the same location within a situation, only one mention of the code was recorded. What results is not a measurement of the presence of a code within a Gendered Media Engaging Situation. Instead, it is a count of how many times a particular code was mentioned within that situation.

This different recording approach was used because how the individual saw gender was not an across the situation aggregate; that is, different sense-making instances may be related to different views on gender. It may be that one individual would see gender the same way through all aspects of the situation, but this was not necessarily the case. To capture the potential for contradictory or otherwise complicating views on gender, what is reported below are the codes developed for this sense-making instance, with quotes from men and women to illustrate both how they saw gender and how these codes coincided and even contradicted each other within the same answer.

After the quotes are given to illustrate each code, any pattern or singular finding will be highlighted and briefly discussed. After the discussion of the qualitative examples, statistical and illustrative tests are reported to highlight where men and women converge and diverge in their frequency of mentioning a particular code within a particular situation. Summary Chart 9.1 illustrates this comparison. Any discussion of comparing across situations is minimal during the qualitative section as the topic is the focus for Chapter 10.

<u>Balanced</u>

Interviewees who indicated that they saw men and women as being equal in some regard, or that one can do what the other does, were coded as seeing there being a balance between men and women. What the code broke down to are two ways of explaining why there is a balance.

The first explanation for the balance can be found across the situations. Men and women simply state that the object being referenced is naturally something both genders can equally have. This was the most common application of the Balanced code and occurred across all four types of situations from both men and women. Thus for Meant for Men Used Once, there was a question from Barbara with her cowboy movies, and an assumption by Ralph with his games.

> "I guess I was a bit confused because as kid I was kinda under impression that I could do whatever wanted, so why are these women at home and not taking an active role in the film?"
>   --Barbara, cowboy movies

> "I think it can apply to both men and women, the competitive nature of it. … A loss is a loss, a win is a win. If you win, you're a winner. If you lose, you're a loser. Both don't like to lose."
>   --Ralph, video games

For Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, both Carla and Xavier saw the balance at some point in their discussion about metal music.

> "Everyone that we knew was encouraged to listen to the metal music, even the girls in the group. So it was sorta like a universal thing…there was no gender differentiation."
>   --Carla, metal music

> "On a side note, this is difficult for me because I've always viewed equal power for everyone. Everyone, no matter gender, creed, race, sexual orientation, etc has the ability to succeed with the right mind set."
>   --Xavier, metal music

Under Meant for Women Used Once, Kaitlin and Vance, both with negative reactions to a romance media product, noted the balance when it came to romance.

> "Both of them should not act so blind, they should act intelligently, that's what, whether you are a man or a woman."
>   --Kaitlin, *Romeo & Juliet*

> "I think guys should date girls, girls should have that one guy – I guess like a guy best friend -- to be there for her…I think that's what all guys and girls need."
>   --Vance, *The Notebook*

Finally, in Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, Carla and Xavier, both with comedies that involved romance, saw the balance in how people should be or what they want.

"I think that just people in general are expected to be personable and happy, not necessarily men more than women or vice versa."
　　--Carla, *Legally Blonde*

"Both men and women can be single waiting for the right person to come along."
　　--Xavier, *Sex and the City*

The equal balance in the interviewee's use of this balance type can be seen in the figure below, as this code is only one of two to have no divergings across the situations. The second type of balancing saw this equalized distribution, although it represents a gendered approach to explaining the balance.

The second explanation focused on the idea that anything men can do, so can women, removing the idea that the object being referenced is only for men. There is Tammy and Dean discussing how they could see their respective media products, golf and car magazines, being not exclusive for men.

"I guess the fact that my grandmother watches golf kinda means that it's not really as male-centric as I assumed. If it really was like this big masculine display, my grandmother probably would not be watching it."
　　--Tammy, golf

"As an item they are geared towards men, but that doesn't mean that as a female, who's into that sort of thing, can't get the same sort of enjoyment out of it."
　　--Dean, car magazines

Isabel, after one encounter with romance novels, was clear that men and women are equals because women can do what men have always done for them.

"That men and women are equal and can do the same things. Men don't have to be protective, and women can manage on their own."

For some men, engaging with a media product they saw as meant for women gave them the idea that women can do things they had thought were mostly the purview of men.

"Maybe that women can do anything, even make good music that can be respected by others."
　　--Yuri, Norah Jones

"I had a sense that women could do some of the skills, maybe not quite at that level because I'd never seen it before."
　　--Barclay, WNBA

There is no real discussion in the interviews that would indicate saying the opposite, that anything women can do, so can men. As argued by feminist scholars, for so long the balance has been tipped in favor of men, and much work has been undertaken in the past several decades to replace this imbalance with equilibrium by

elevating women. Those interviewed here would have been children of that movement, and their reflections on the balance can indicate the impact of the feminists' work.

Nothing to Balance

Related to the previous code is the view that says the issue of gender does not enter into how the individual considers that aspect of the situation. Or that gender is not as big of a concern as the individual's personal preferences or some other way of differentiating people from one another. Either way, the interviewee saw nothing there to attempt to balance between men and women.

The first explanation for why there nothing there focused on those interviewees who said gender was not an issue at that time that they were engaging with the media product, whether it was meant for men or women, used once or repeatedly. For Becky and Ted, both playing certain video games only once as children, gender just was not something they were thinking about at the time.

> "I never really had a sense of what was appropriate for men or women."
>   --Becky, video games

> "I wasn't really worried about boys versus girls. The only girls I really knew were tomboys, and I didn't really at that point in time have any sort of differentiation. I still didn't realize that Rainbow Brite was not cool."
>   --Ted, video games

In his repeated engaging with dating reality shows he said was Meant for Men, Adam focused less on men versus women and more on human beings in general.

> "Human beings can be isolated very easily. They don't realize that communication is something that takes effort."
>   --Adam, *Flavor of Love/Rock of Love*

While repeatedly engaging with something seen as meant for women, Barclay and Sam both indicated that there was no gender divide between people who play basketball and people who are conceited.

> "Again, if you can play you can play, it doesn't matter what kind of gender you are."
>   --Barclay, WNBA

> "There's obviously pretentious men and pretentious women…so I don't think there's too much of a divide there."
>   --Sam, Bravo Network

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Taken at face value, for these interviewees, there were aspects of the situations they were facing for which gender was not an issue because of some more universal aspect of humanity or because gender was not on their minds.

For other interviewees, how they personally felt overrode any concern about gender and how it related to that aspect of the situation. Becky was adamant that aspects of her first encounter with a repeatedly returned to media product, whether for men with *Stargate* or for women with online dating, were just about her as an individual and not her as a woman. Kaitlin felt the same way about the media products meant for men she engaged with.

> "I really don't think there is anything like that is appropriate for men or is appropriate for women. It's basically your personal interest."
>   --Kaitlin, video games

> "If you ask me, I have not taught a thing about my gender because it was never an issue with me, being girl, I should behave one way. Yeah, it was my own personality, it definitely was very different if I compare it to my brother. … It's a personality thing, it depends on the personality of the individual"
>   --Kaitlin, soccer

Still others focused on what they personally got out of the engaging and did not consider gender as an issue in that aspect of their engaging.

> "I don't know if girls would be as happy as I would be happy. I don't even think it's even just a gender difference, for that. I think guys would be acting differently than guys. I think everything's different. I guess it was just me that was the one that was different."
>   --Vance, Dave Matthew's Band

> "Not really, because I wasn't really paying attention to the larger context of the magazine. I was more just looking at stuff that would be beneficial to me trying to become more attractive to a woman."
>   --Sam, Cosmopolitan

> "After realized that it was kinda this girl's manga, I picked up on the elements that made it that. I was like oh it is kinda girly but I don't care. I like this character, I find it interesting, I want to know what happens."
>   --Ted, romance manga

An interesting addition to this grouping is Chad. He represents those who said gender was not the important divide to consider; rather the generation gap divides him from his father's love of football.

> "Again it relates to my perspective being dominated by old versus new as oppose to gender."

Chad's case is unusual in that he is saying his personal preference, as the younger man, was not the media enjoyed by the older generation of men, or his father. What

is interesting to note here the prevalence of examples from men saying they did not see gender as an issue when engaging in media seen as meant for women. As is taken up further below and in Chapter 10, this is not just a coincidence of the best quotes selected to illustrate the code.

Too Different to Balance

In a direct contrast to the two previous codes, this view on gender sees men and women as existing completely separate from one another based on some point of comparison, such as a trait or a behavior. This is the discussion of men and women having different roles to fulfill in life, without discussion of how one role is necessarily better than the other. There may be a discussion that men or women are allowed to do something while the other cannot, but this statement is given as an assumptive fact about reality and not as a critical evaluation of that fact. When the code is broken down on this basic dimension as to what made the interviewee say the two genders were too different to balance, an interesting gender division emerges.

Some interviewees discussed that this inability to balance was due to there simply being different roles in life men and women have to fulfill. These discussions tended to be from women more than men, across all types of situations. Barbara was young when she watched John Wayne movies once with her dad, but even then she could sense the difference.

> "I guess at time my idea of gender roles was a little bit different, and I guess it did kinda fit into the stereotype of women are at home, men are out having these adventures…"

Kendra discussed two different types of roles the genders assume. Playing video games once, she said the difference focused on who pursues whom romantically, while her experiences with *The Godfather* movies led her to see the stereotypes about who stays home and who doesn't.

> "The question of pursuit is a very gender oriented thing. Men are taught to pursue things, women taught to be desirable and the thing to be pursued."
>   --Kendra, video games

> "I guess it just kinda reinforced the idea that women are in the kitchen and take care of the kids, and the men are out there fighting to protect all of that."
>   --Kendra, *The Godfather* movies

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When engaging with media seen as meant for women, Becky and Carla agreed that men and women are different in the way they define themselves.

> "Men define themselves by what they are; women define themselves by what they have."
> --Becky, music CDs

> "For men it's sorta assumed that they are independent, that's part of their gender role, and also they're strong, but…I guess for women strength and independence means something different than it does for men..."
> --Carla, *Legally Blonde*

Thus far, all examples have been women who focused on there being polar oppositions that men and women inhabit in regard to some aspect of life.

However, while they were the majority, men did see similar things. Representing them is Ted, with his repeated engaging with a children's movie, *Beauty and the Beast,* seen as meant for women.

> "The movie, while being a bit more feminist, still heavily reinforced gender stereotypes. Men were action driven, action oriented, women were damsels-in-distress, even when they begged not to be and told the men they were being stupid. The men were still headstrong, went off and did whatever they pleased."

In a sense then, this way of saying the genders are too different to compare and potentially balance is recognition of the stereotypes that exist and categorize men and women into separate boxes.

The majority of the following examples are from men that build upon this idea with the recognition that these differences are due to what the sociocultural structure allows as appropriate. Sam saw this imposition in at least three different ways across three situations; from his onetime use of college admissions material, to his continual engagings with liquor advertisements, to that one encounter with Cosmopolitan. In them all, he mentioned the differences between what men and women could or could not do were according to sociocultural norms.

> "I think it's very common and forgivable for a male to get incredibly drunk and do crazy stuff, but I think it's okay for a girl to drink and get drunk, but not to do a lot of the stuff, especially like sexual encounters and stuff, that's like you're a slut or something like that, but if you're a man and you do it you're kinda cool."
> Sam, college admissions material

> "You feel as a male you are supposed to become a professional and fend for a family if you do have one. And if you are a female, you're supposed to marry a man and maybe or maybe not have a job. If you're a working woman, it's a good thing, and it's unique, it's something you are to be commended for, but if you are a working man, it's just expected of you."
> ---Sam, high end liquor advertisements

> "I started to realize like, I don't know, maybe a guy is supposed to be a brute, and he's supposed to impose himself on a girl, whereas a girl never really is supposed to approach a guy."
>   --Sam, Cosmopolitan

In the two used only once situations, he appears to say women are the ones who are not allowed to act sexually aggressive, while in his Meant for Men Used Repeatedly engaging, he turns to focus on what women are rewarded for doing, even if it's nothing more than what men traditionally have done.

Vance, on the other hand, says the same thing, but in different ways, when he talks about his engagings with media products meant for women. With this onetime encounter with *The Notebook*, he says guys should not show emotions, while discussing his repeat engagings with *Grey's Anatomy* he says guys should not be normally drawn to the show.

> "Guys should act like stronger figures, and the girls are allowed to show emotions whenever they want and have the guy be there for them."
>   --Vance, *The Notebook*

> "Girls probably watch it a lot, but I think for guys that would definitely be a guilty pleasure if they watched the show, just because it's just one of those shows that's like woman based. It's one of those shows that's a normal turn on for a woman…"
>   --Vance, *Grey's Anatomy*

Of course, it was not just Sam and Vance making these observations. Other men focused on what men are allowed to do or supposed to be, and that these interpolated subject positions were different from those for women.

> "Yes, I was raised thinking females had no reason to drink, but males could."
>   --Xavier, Hillary Clinton news story

> "I guess when shit happens with men, you gotta be strong. … With girls, it's good to show that emotion, but with guys it's not."
>   --Vance, Dave Matthew's Band

However, as with the previous subtype, while the majority might have been men, that did not preclude women from making the same types of indirect social commentaries, such as Carla on soap operas.

> "I'm pretty sure that the people that make soap operas are guys. So from that it seems that it's okay for guys to tell what girls should care about but not vice versa…"

And all though there are these two tendencies for how the men and women explained their view that the genders are too different to balance, when these two ways are combined into the act of seeing the difference, then there are no major

divergings between men and women in the situations. This equalization is discussed below with the figure for illustration.

Also, the discussion here what was appropriate for the one but not the other is also the subject of four other codes in this scheme. The reason they were left as part of this Too Different to Balance code is because both genders were mentioned as existing in separate positions in regards to the same point of reference. In the subsequent codes, only men or women are discussed as to what is appropriate or inappropriate for that gender.

Imbalance to Men

There were times when men and women were compared to one another, with or without any direct discussion of what was appropriate for the one but not the other. In the case of this code, the interviewees had to indicate that they saw men being more so than women in reference to some criterion. This is not a discussion that men and women are completely different from one another for this or that reason, but that men are more than women on this or that dimension of comparison. In order to be included in this code, the person had to directly say that men were more than women, or that women were less than men, on a dimension of comparison.

Across the four situation types, men and women discussed various dimensions of comparisons on which men are more so than women. One common dimension is that men are more dominating, aggressive and audacious than women. For some interviewees, men were seen as more dominating because they were dominating in the media being engaged with. Eileen saw this in her encounter with Rambo, and Barbara noticed it with the unequal distribution of characters on *Lost*.

> "The male characters were more in power than the female characters were featured in the movies. Not like my own what is appropriate for men versus women, but it also kinda shows how society views what is appropriate for men, which is like to be masculine, the leading person, and the women always being behind the scenes."
>   --Eileen, *Rambo* movies

> "Just that, you know, society thinks that it is more appropriate for a man to take charge than a woman, or it's more likely."
>   --Barbara, *Lost*

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While these interviewees inferred something about the distribution of power based on male characters in their media products, Xavier and Vance inferred something about the nature of men from seeing men in their media products. In the one encounter for Vance with *Animal House*, he saw how men are more adventurous than women.

> "I see males definitely, if they have two or three guys, they would do something [stupid] just because guys are more courageous to do things like that, than girls are."

For Xavier, repeatedly seeing male musicians performing involved a statement about the chances for female musicians.

> "It seemed like men had better chances in the music industry than females, simply because males are more aggressive on stage."
> --Xavier, metal music

According to these men and women, engaging with a media product meant for men involved their inferring something about the nature of men in reality. Of course, causality cannot be assumed from these examples, as it is possible what they saw was reinforcing what they had already noticed in the world around them.

More evidence as to the confusing nature of causality can be found in other statements men and women made about how men are more so than women. It is not clear from these statements that the views were directly related to the content of the media product. Instead, they seem to be more reflections on general imbalances that favor men in some way. Recalling the time he once played *Grand Theft Auto*, Ben reflected on how men are more nonchalant than women.

> "I think that's more of a man thing to do, that's more manly then to not really worry about it, because some girls really care about what other people think."

Discussing her onetime experience with pornography, Gloria reflected on how it is more acceptable for men to be sexual beings.

> "I guess it's more acceptable for guys to be attracted towards this kind of industry. I know I'm a woman, and have sexual desires, but in my mind it's still hard for me to understand why a woman would want or feel the need to be in that industry, where it is much more acceptable for me to go yeah, a guy's into porn because that's all a guy wants, that's what we're told."

In fact, when Gloria was discussing her repeated engagings with war miniseries *Band of Brothers*, her previous beliefs about men and war appear to have impacted her reception of the media product.

> "Seeing only men in war is something I grew up hearing about anyway, so that's an idea that men are much more suited for battle, women shouldn't be put in that situation."

Meanwhile, Jeremy's discussion about playing *The Sims* computer game focused less on the content and more on expected behaviors.

> "Not about what's appropriate, perhaps more of what's expected. It's generally accepted that men will waste more of their time watching TV than women."

Before moving on, it should be noted that all of these views on the imbalance favoring men are reflections of stereotypes that exist in the sociocultural environment around these individuals. At this point, and with other codes, the extent to which the individual actually endorses the stereotype is not being questioned. This issue of endorsing stereotypes will be raised in the discussion of Chapter 10.

Imbalance to Women

While the previous code focused on how men and women saw an imbalance favoring men on some dimension of comparison, this code reflects the reverse. There were times in their situations that interviewees reflected on how women have something more than men. Again, the dimension of comparison could include a discussion of what was appropriate for women, as long as it was done by saying it was more appropriate for women or less appropriate for men. To be coded here, the interviewee had to be clear that women were more so than men or that men were less so than women. Without that comparative clause, the statement was coded by one of the four following codes.

While above men might have been more likely to talk about what was appropriate for either gender when they saw gender as Too Different to Balance, it appears women are more likely to talk about what is more appropriate, allowed and expected for their own gender when comparing themselves to men. Such remarks were found when the situation was with a media product meant for men but used only once, as with Deanna and Lily.

> "Society always says how men grow up later than women… that women are supposed to mature earlier, faster."
>   --Deanna, Maxim

> "It's definitely I feel like more appropriate for a girl to be showing she's scared and jumpy, I guess just scared in general, than it is for a guy. They're supposed

to act more macho, and nothing fazes them in the aspect of action movies or scary movies."
--Lily, action movies

The same could be found when women such as Gloria and Lana discussed using a media product seen meant for men but used repeatedly.

"Definitely in my family it is more okay for women to be upset."
--Gloria, *Band of Brothers*

"I think we as women have a lot more to worry about as far as our gender is concerned than guys."
--Lana, Hot Topic website

But then also when it was something seen meant for women and engaged with repeatedly, such as Carla watching the romantic comedy *Legally Blonde*.

"One, that it's appropriate for women to like Legally Blonde, and not so much men. Two, that it's appropriate for women to care about fashion and not so much men."

However, as with the Too Different to Balance code, just because women were the majority, this did not preclude for comments by men to be found to reflect the same sentiment. Yuri's general thoughts about Norah Jones' music demonstrate this sense of appropriateness as being more for women than men.

"I think it's more appropriate for women to listen it. I mean, obviously some men do listen to it, and I think that's fine, but I think it's more appropriate for women to listen to it."

It should also be pointed out that the majority of these statements occurred in situations where the media product engaged with was interpreted as meant for men. This finding is reflected in the frequencies depicted in the summary chart below, and will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 10.

As with seeing gender as being an Imbalance to Men, there were men and women who just reflected on how women are more so than men on some dimension of comparison. The point of interest here is that the majority of these statements come from situations where the engaging was with a media product seen as meant for women. Only Ben, in discussing repeatedly watching highlights on ESPN's *Sportscenter*, made a reference to how women have better attention spans: "I think women can deal with stuff for a longer period of time than guys can." When the engaging was only once with something seen as meant for women, Gloria, Jeanne and Xavier all saw different ways in which women can be more than men.

> "I think the girls' status or whatever is more fragile, or at least it was in my high school. It takes much less to become unpopular…"
>   --Gloria, *The Notebook*

> "I think in general a lot of things that are more girl oriented are the romantic, lovey-dovey things that can be termed corny a lot of the times… But I think that is the stereotype of things geared towards women and girls. I mean, I do like other things that I think guys would say are corny."
>   --Jeanne, Lifetime movies

> "Females seem to bond with gay males in ways that straight males cannot."
>   --Xavier, Margret Cho comedy

Interestingly, when the media product was seen as meant for women and used repeatedly, Isabel, Vance and Xavier all remarked on the emotional nature of women compared to men.

> "That women could be more emotional, and have the desire to have a boyfriend and fit in with their friends, that was more natural for women to hourly talk about and explain."
>   --Isabel, youth books

> "The girls probably are going to open up more to the emotional scenes, and the guys would just be sitting there watching it and showing less emotion."
>   --Vance, *Grey's Anatomy*

> "Female share stronger bonds with each other more so than two males because females are able to get more personal and intimate in conversation."
>   --Xavier, *Sex and the City*

As with the other imbalance code, the ways in which women are favored more than men coincide with gender stereotypes about romance, social interaction, and emotionality. Given this reflection of gender stereotypes about women, it is not surprising the preponderance of such comments were made in engagings with media products interpreted as meant for women. Engaging with a feminized gendered media product possibly influenced the interviewee's mind to recall feminine gender stereotypes, thereby indicating a gendered interpretive stance.

Men Held Up

This code is first of the four that focus exclusively on one assessment of appropriateness. Here the interviewee made some reference to the fact that there are things men are allowed to do, certain internal and/or external behaviors that are judged appropriate for someone of that gender. To be coded here and nowhere else, the individual could not compare men to women, either as being more so than women or saying that they are just different from one another. In this sense, the

person had to see men being held into the spotlight for what is appropriate for them, even if what is appropriate for them is not directly referenced. As long as some dimension of traits and/or behaviors are being used to say that this is the way men are, then it is coded here.

As reflected in the figure below, in all but the Meant for Women Used Repeatedly situation, men were more likely to mention at least once some way in which men are allowed, expected or granted the right to do, think or feel something. For these men, a number of traits and behaviors were discussed as being appropriate for men. When the media product was seen as meant for men, the comment reflected their definitions of masculinity as being aggressive and dominant.

> "For men it's okay to be aggressive, as long as you don't cross the line to cheating or low blows or things like that."
>   --Barclay, *Friday Night Lights*

> "And again this is horribly sexist of me and I know and all that PC crap, but I believe that the guy should be the hero for the woman if at all possible. And if she's in trouble, he should be there for her and stand up for her, be the hero."
>   --Franklin, scary movies

> "This was reinforcing the idea that men should all be fit, and muscular, whether or not it translated unto ultimate success, winning a championship, all men should at least try to get there, and to try and succeed like [the basketball players] did."
>   --Yuri, basketball

> "Well I mean it had a lot to do with my definition of manliness. To become men, you just work very hard to become very good at something, and that's success, to become good and be recognized, to be the best. You never stop working until you are the best. Sacrifice everything else if necessary."
>   --Zane, grunge rock

Naturally, then, when the media product was something seen as originally meant for women, the discussion was on what a man is not supposed to be. Chiefly, as demonstrated by Ted and Gerald, the man is not supposed to care.

> "I don't think guys are supposed to care all that much. That's changing…but for the most part guys like action movies, action filled, and they root for the underdog because they want to him kick some ass, and they don't root for people because they are interested in them or like them or feel connected to them."
>   --Ted, romance manga

> "I thought as a guy I shouldn't care. ... I shouldn't care that the movie was silly.
>   --Gerald, *Titanic*

As with the other codes, the preponderance of men does not meant women did not make similar comments. For Deanna, both of her media engagings with something

meant for men included the idea that men are supposed to be sexual and violent beings.

> "I mean like the whole fact that if had a lot of like half naked girls on it and stuff like that kind of supported – like you always think that guys are supposed to, I don't know, look at things like that and stuff, so I guess that kinda supported that. And the topics that it covered kinda supported what you grew up thinking that guys should be interested in."
>   --Deanna, Maxim

> "I thought of it as, we were taught not to be violent or mean to anybody, but I would see my brothers picking on each other and stuff like that…it's understandable if guys use violence…"
>   --Deanna, *Mortal Kombat*

When it came to those media products Meant for Women Used Once, after watching a soap opera, Lily agreed with the Ted and Gerald about what men should not be doing.

> "I feel like in general my vision of a guy would not be to feel quite as sad for people, just think well that's life. That's the way it is, at least with the guys I encounter."

Whereas Eileen, from watching the dating reality shows *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette*, reflected back on her own culture to react against what the show was saying women should do: "I think it's appropriate for men to chase the girl, it can give them more thrill." Then, when it came to those situations of Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, women were more likely to discuss this gender view on men. For Lily, watching a Broadway musical related to her a sense of what men should not be.

> "I don't think a male would take to that level of actually feeling bad when watching a musical. From the guys that I've talked to, that I've seen it with…none of them seem to take it that deep and actually think about what was going on with the characters."
>   --Lily, *Les Misérables*

While for Jamie, reading romance novels gave her a sense of what a man should be, at least from society's perspective.

> "The male characters were physically being portrayed as strong, in control, and being able to take care of the female character, who had some kind of problems. … I think that in the books society teaches us that men typically are like the caretaker, the ones that are in control and are like going to take care of the female."

Overall, men were more likely than women to hold men up to the spotlight to showcase what they can do, but this tendency did not manifest in those engagings with media products Meant for Women Used Repeatedly. Perhaps in this situation,

the issue of being a man was not as pressing as when they were engaging with a similar product but only once; in those cross-gendering situations, the stigma that they should not be watching was more obvious as there was less personal preference for that item anyway.

Women Held Up

As the natural companion to the previous code, this view on gender reflects those times when men and women focused their comments on what is appropriate for women. Such focus would be coded if the interviewee either said directly what was appropriate, or if the person discussed what women do without comparing them to men in some way. Thus, for this code, it is women are who are held up to the spotlight for scrutiny or exhibition.

As is reflected in the figure below, women almost overwhelmingly were more likely to make these types of statements in all of their engagings with gendered media products. When the experience being discussed was with a media product meant for men use once or repeatedly, women like Carla and Deanna mentioned how what was appropriate for women given the perceived nature of the media product not being meant for them.

> "I think that women are expected to suck at video games, and it's sort of an anomaly when don't."
>   --Carla, video games

> "I guess it seems like a lot of women are unhappy with how they look, so maybe that's kinda appropriate…"
>   --Deanna, Maxim

To an extent, Zane and Gerald agreed with the women, in that they didn't think women would be as interested in their media product as they were.

> "I just really didn't think that women thought about these issues [such as the Vietnam War] at all. That women sort of lived in a world that was a little bit more focused on the immediate and what was right around them."
>   --Zane, *Apocalypse Now*

> "Girls were supposed to be more quaint, more serious and sympathetic than our humor would allow at that time."
>   --Gerald, Monty Python

For these examples, the unifying thought is that women engaging something not meant for her gender either allows the women to not do it as well as men, to not be

as interested with it as much as men, and to not have as positive a reaction to it as men.

However, when it came to a media product meant for women the interviewees were engaging with, the statements reflected stereotyped assumptions as to what is appropriate. One clear example comes from Gloria, whose single encounter with *The Notebook* reaffirmed her belief on who is supposed to cry in a heterosexual dating couple

> "If one of us was supposed to cry, it's gonna be the woman. I mean, it's dumb but that's the way it is, the way it's supposed to be."

Tammy discussed how she learned what was appropriate due to her repeated engagings with teen magazines that guided her to become a woman, which to her meant to be pretty and not a tomboy.

> "I think it sort of created that [sense of appropriateness]… That's sort of the time when you start to differentiate, you know, and you realize that you're – I don't want to say that's when you realize that you're different than boys, you're not, I mean, obviously, but you sort of learn what your role is as a woman…and you start to want to be pretty."

Curiously, both men and women indicated being aware that these are stereotypes being propagated by the media for women to base themselves on.

> "Well again, I just think it's the kind of thing that women like because they're supposed to and men don't because they don't. That kind of social commodity that just fits into stereotype perfectly, and women seem to enjoy it."
> --Zane, *Love Actually*

> "That it's really aimed at what women are supposed to want."
> --Becky, online dating sites

There were also indications that perhaps these stereotypes for women, which feminists have sought to dispel, are changing. Barbara saw in her one encounter with the television series *Lipstick Jungle* the reinforcement of a new appropriateness for career women.

> "Just that it's appropriate for women to on these high power roles, and it's clearly been accepted in our society now if it's on all of these different programs."

Adam, expressing his love for *Sex and the City*, noted that it is not appropriate for women to embrace their sexual sides because of the show.

> "Flirting is appropriate. Before this show these girls would not flirt for women…finally there was something on TV that a lot of people were watching that said it's okay to flirt, there's nothing wrong with it, you're not being whorish because you're flirting… The whole point of it is that they were dying to flirt."

One of the reasons then women mentioned more comments that were coded here is that what is appropriate for women appears to be in flux, with a larger range than for men. Women can now be like women, but they can also be more like men, whereas the reverse does not appear to be true – at least, based on the comments of the men and women in this interview.

Men Pressed Down

Whereas the previous two codes have focused on what men or women can do, the last two focus on what they cannot do. When men and women discussed what is inappropriate for men to do, or focusing on what men are not allowed to do, should not do or even want to do, and are not expected to do, then the reflection was coded here, as seeing men being pressed down by others and their sociocultural environment.

Across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations, men and women reflected on how what was considered inappropriate for men to do actually match stereotypical assumptions. In fact, the largest stereotype is that men are not allowed to show emotions or care about emotional things, that doing so would be feminine and thus inappropriate for them.

> "I guess maybe the emotions being shown, kind of. In society it's very not manly to show emotions oftentimes. I guess it's considered a weakness."
> --Ben, *Sportscenter*

> "He was not supposed to cry that much."
> --Gloria, *The Notebook*

> "Guys generally don't like stories through song, it tends to be sappy or whatever, to have all these girl things associated with it. Guys aren't allowed to like it."
> --Ted, *Beauty and the Beast*

Abby, talking about having to watch *The Man Show* with her boyfriend and his father one time, combined all these elements when she reflected on the dangers men face if they act inappropriately.

> "I feel like with men they can't really talk about wanting to fall in love. I guess because in our society, it's not really looked down upon, but they might be called like a sissy, or think that there's something weird about them, they should only want sex and a good time."

The impact of stereotypes depicting what is inappropriate could also be seen in how men and women discussed whether or not men could engage willingly and openly with a media product meant for women. The unanimous conclusion, no they cannot.

<u>Used Once</u>

"The stereotypes are so strong in the content that I don't see how anyone can be interested, and the exaggeration of the stereotypes makes it difficult for boys to like it. Therefore, it is inappropriate in a way for them. Only girls can find an interest in the stereotypes projected."
  --Alice, romance novels

"I guess is wouldn't necessarily be appropriate for a man to read Cosmo, at least a straight man, but I don't think there's anything taboo or wrong with it, or would make you looked down upon by anybody that you wouldn't want to be looked down upon by."
  --Sam, Cosmopolitan

"Men shouldn't really be watching the Golden Girls or admitting to it. I had a feeling some of us might, but no one would admit it to each other."
  --Barclay, Golden Girls

<u>Used Repeatedly</u>

"It isn't a stereotypical guy movie. I don't think they'd be frowned upon by watching it, but showing an extreme interest in it would start raising questions."
  --Nicole, Little Mermaid

"The whole idea of a man being really excited to get the next season of a show that's just about a bunch of women and their dating habits, where the main character is a sex advice columnist, didn't jive with my image of what men want but I found it very compelling myself."
  --Zane, Sex and the City

"Maybe the fact that I feel guilty when do it. I think it's not very appropriate for men to read it, but I do it anyway."
  --Yuri, People magazine

Men and women agreed that a cross-gender engaging for men, whether with something just once or repeatedly, would be a rare and most likely secretive engaging; thereby matching with Hearing from Others and Sensing Appropriate from previous sense-making instances.

Finally, there were also statements made that discussed what the interviewee saw as inappropriate for men, which did not necessarily reflect a gender stereotype on inappropriateness. Jeanne, discussing her one encounter with professional wrestling, did not think being aggressive was an appropriate behavioral trait for anyone.

"[Being violent] is not appropriate for men, but I think it's not really any comparison to women."

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Barclay stressed that he did not like some of the sexual portrayals of men in his sports movie, *Coach Carter,* that he's watched repeatedly.

> "That men shouldn't just be chasing skirts the whole time, that they should treat women better than that. They should treat women as women and not sex toys."

Both of these statements are reflections on the content of media products being seen as meant for men, and a critique against the content is also a critique against lingering stereotypes. For these individuals, their determination for appropriateness was based on personal ideas of what is right and wrong in how men and women behave towards one another.

Women Pressed Down

As there was a counterpart to Men Held Up, there is likewise a counterpart to Men Pressed Down. To be considered as this code, men and women had to reflect upon what is considered to be inappropriate for women to think, feel and even do in the same way as the previous code. Any comparison to men meant the reflection had to be coded in either Too Different to Balance or Imbalance to Men. Across the four situations, there were men and women who saw the inappropriate internal or external behavior reflecting sociocultural stereotypes about what women are not supposed to do, think and feel.

Similar to the distribution of statements made that reflected Men Pressed Down, men and women were split in talking about what led them to decide what is inappropriate for men versus women. Carla felt somewhat relieved that she did not play the video game well, as it would have been inappropriate to have done so, and yet she also felt odd that she was deriving so much sense of self from her repeated engaging with metal music.

> "It's sorta inappropriate for women be really good at first person shooters and fighting games and stuff like that."
> --Carla, video games

> "I'm not sure that women are supposed to derive self-worth from metal music. So in that sense it was very odd… going to the shows, I knew it was sorta inappropriate for me to listen to it, or at least in a non-sexual way…"
> --Carla, metal music

For Kendra, she reflected from her experience watching *The Godfather* movies that women should not be able to go abroad, yet seeing women acting sexually aggressive while inappropriate made watching a reality show more enjoyable.

> "Women shouldn't have time to do something like that. Like a diplomatic journey type of a person is more appropriate for men."
> --Kendra, *The Godfather* movies

> "Women aren't supposed to be that aggressive. That's why it's fun to watch, because it's different."
> --Kendra, *Rock of Love*

Other men and women discussed what led them to conclude some external force was determining what was stereotypically inappropriate. Reflecting on his experience with the college admissions material, Sam discussed how he sensed colleges were saying what was inappropriate for women to do while on their campuses.

> "Certain girls around here you'd see riding around on skateboards, and that's not what you would see in the thing. You might have a guy riding around on a skateboard, but you certainly wouldn't have a girl riding around on a skateboard. Because that would defy the example that…it seemed the college material was focused on what a girl should be in college or what a university administrator felt."

Eileen compared the culture of her homeland with that of the United States when determining how the women on the dating reality shows *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette* were acting inappropriately.

> "I don't think it's appropriate like if you're a woman for you to throw yourself at a guy because he might respect you less."

Overall, these quotes reflect the recognition of stereotypes from a sociocultural structure on what is inappropriate for women. Women should not be aggressive, sexually or otherwise.

As with Men Pressed Down, there were men and women whose reflection on what is inappropriate coming from their own personal beliefs. Of these examples, Kelvin represents the few men in reflecting upon a connection with the *Training Day* movie about downtown Los Angeles and his beliefs about women on a college campus.

> "…Ethan Hawke tells them to stop, goes out, basically beats up the three guys, rescues the girl, and tells her not to go wandering by herself, to be missing school…and when you think about [our campus] now, more for safety reasons than they can't do it on their own, but I think women shouldn't go out wandering by themselves."

For the women, their application of personal beliefs can be understood as countering the stereotypes that have been prevalent, and unquestioned, until attention as brought to them by the feminist movement. Recalling her onetime encounter with Maxim, Deanna reacted against the idea that women should be sexually manipulative.

> "I don't think that's like the ideal [using sex for power] that's supposed to be appropriate for women."

Similarly, Isabel's encounter with romance novels involved challenging the idea perpetuated in the book about women, love and marriage.

> "I thought that the books were slightly degrading to women in that all we ever want in life is to find a wonderful husband and get married and have babies. And so in that sense I thought that the books were off on what the gender norms should be and are because they just presented loved stories and not career women or not women who had other goals in life."

The final example differs slightly from the previous two, in that Deanna's reasons for seeing the reason women being focused only one beauty as inappropriate came from her family attempting to counter dominant sociocultural normative beliefs.

> "I think just from my family it's inappropriate for women pay attention to physical appearances and looks, and to compare themselves, and to try to be pretty."
>   --Deanna, *America's Next Top Model*

As reflected in the summary chart figure below, similar to Imbalance to Women, regardless of where the determination of inappropriateness comes from, women again overwhelmingly mentioned at least once a statement that could be coded here. Indeed, when the engaging was with a media product meant for women, only women reflected on what was inappropriate for women without making any comparison to men.

Same but Different

A final qualitative comparison to discuss here will not be found in the figure below as it is the result of an interesting pairing of two codes. There were only several statements made by men and women across the situations that combined Balanced and Too Different to Balance into a new meaning: Same but Different. These are statements were the interviewees indicated that while men and women are the same in one way, in another related way they are just simply different. While

the codes used in these pairings were counted along with the rest of their respective codes to be displayed below, the pairings are mentioned here as they relate to an overall pattern in this sense-making instance.

These statements reflected the idea that while men and women are alike in one particular way, from desiring the same thing to being required to do the same thing, what they desired to what they did were very different. One man, Gerald, made the same statement in different situations, believing that men and women seek out the same type of effect from the media, but just from different types of media products.

> "The forms might be different for men and women. I think definitely some forms of media cater toward the stereotype of what is woman versus what is man, but we can all be kinda thrown into this tizzy of contradictions if we strive for a certain type of living, a certain type of seeing the world. But then the media that cater to us can bring in powerful influences to make us buy into another way."
>   --Gerald, *The Transporter*

> "Men and women both do that. The two crudely stereotyped, in my mind, genders, sort of group, gather around certain forms of media, we identify with certain types of things…so it's sorta like something that defines a group. So the phenomenon is across genders, but the specific forms of media that might be useful to that group are different."
>   --Gerald, Monty Python

> "I think it's across the board. I think that hurt of doing productive, relational things with your time applies to everybody. Again, the manifestations, the things you do around the group that you're with, might be gendered."
>   --Gerald, *Dr. Quinn Medicine Woman*

For the remaining examples, men made such observations when the media being engaged with was meant for their gender.

> "I think the physical qualities are very heavily emphasized on both sides. Just that fact that you see one type on each side, just one type. This is what males should look like, this is how they should act. Females should look like this. It rarely deviates from the standard look and behavior."
>   --Jeremy, GQ magazine

> "If everyone wanted to be happy, they could do it, just in different ways. Women could be happy if they were intelligent, men could be happy if they were victorious on the field."
>   --Yuri, basketball

While women made such statements when the media product being engaged with was meant for women.

> "It is the same for men, they are trained from a very young age with Boy Scouts and sports and those kinds of activities. They are also trained very young of what their role is supposed to be in society. It's different, there's a different way

of doing it with them, whereas there are very specific beauty elements that are outlined in magazines for women."
  --Kendra, Cosmopolitan

"In the sense of identifying or not identifying with what you see. Men want to be macho and athletic, some of them, the ones that watch the more macho and athletic things, and women want to and think they have to be like the women that they see."
  --Nicole, soap operas

"I think guys and girls both like to watch TV shows because they can relate one way or another. The only difference is that guys and girls might watch different types of shows because guys relate more to the guys…and with girls it's the exact same but the opposite."
  --Megan, *The Hills*

As only eight such statements were made across all 172 situations, it did not make sense to quantitatively display these occasions and compare men and women on them. However, the preponderance of men making such statements fits into a pattern seen with how men saw gender in their situations, and as such will be discussed in the summaries of Chapter 10.

Summary Table

   There are 9 categories of How Helped and four Gendered Media Engaging Situations in which to compare men and women. This results in a total of 36 locations in which there may be convergings and divergings. These locations have been plotted for men and women in the summary chart below. In this chart, each code is a specific color. Percentages are given only for those comparisons deemed to be divergent.

   Within each situation, men and women were compared for how often they mentioned a media product that could be recorded as that specific code. This comparison happened in two ways. First, one-way analyses of variance (degrees of freedom 1, 42) were calculated for each code. Given the small sample size, any difference significant at $p < 0.10$ or less was considered a diverging. The size of the significance was indicated as follows: a = $p < .001$; b = $p < .01$; c = $p < .05$; d = $p < .10$.

   Second, the illustrations in the summary chart were examined to find additional divergings that occurred but did not reach statistical significance due to the sample size. An illustrative difference was considered a diverging if the magnitude of one code's frequency was approximately twice that of the other or

more. If there was no mention by one gender, then the other had to be at least 2%, indicating at least two separate people mentioned that code.

There are locations when either the men or the women reported a solitary mention of a code. Given the sample size, it is hard to determine if this is a pattern that may result in a diverging or a converging. As such, these discrepancies will not be included as divergings. Statistical and illustrative divergings are indicated in the summary chart as the only ones to have their corresponding percentages displayed.

Summary Chart 9.1. How Saw Gender When Engaging with Media Product

Statistical. Analysis of the one-way ANOVA results indicated 15 divergings that met the criteria for significant difference listed above. Those divergings are demarcated by bold, italicized percentages in the summary chart to more efficiently

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demonstrate these differences. Thus, there were 41.7% of the total locations that showed a significant difference between men and women in discussing how they saw gender within the situation when they were engaging with the media product they chose to discuss.

In Meant for Men Used Once, men were more likely to focus more on what was appropriate for men (F = 3.716, p<.10), whereas women focused more on the imbalance that favors men (F = 8.387, p<.01), the imbalance that favors women (F = 3.051, p<.10), what is appropriate for women (F = 4.454, p<.05), and what is inappropriate for women (F = 6.414, p<.05). In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, men were more likely to focus on what was appropriate for men (F = 3.394, p<.10) while women were more likely to focus on the imbalance that favors men (F = 9.034, p<.01).

In Meant for Women Used Once, men were more likely to focus on gender not being an issue (F = 4.670, p<.05), whereas women focused more on the imbalance that favors women (F = 3.060, p<.10), what is appropriate for women (F = 5.594, p<.05), and what is inappropriate for women (F = 4.678, p<.05). In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, men were more likely to focus again on gender not being an issue (F = 3.275, p<.10) while women focused more on what is appropriate for men (F = 2.868, p<.10), what is appropriate for women (F = 5.011, p<.05), and what is inappropriate for women (F = 5.889, p<.05).

Illustrative. In addition to the statistical divergings, there are 6 divergings in the summary chart that meet the criteria for an illustrative diverging. This means 16.7% of total locations can be classified as such. In Meant for Men Used Once, women appear more likely to focus on what is inappropriate for men and for women. In Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, men were the ones who appear more focused on what is inappropriate for men, whereas women appeared more focused on the imbalance as it favors women. In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, women appear more focused on the imbalance as it favors men, while men appear more focused on what is inappropriate for men.

Divergings versus Convergings. Combining the statistical and illustrative divergings results in 58.3% of the total locations showing differences in how men and women saw gender operating during their engaging with the media products across the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. At that percentage, how gender was seen in the situation was the only coding scheme to have a majority of locations containing divergings, with only 41.6% having convergings, with none due to the presence of no codes. Thus, for the most part, men and women were more dissimilar, with their convergings contradictorily more likely in seeing men and women as equals or as simply too different to compare.

CHAPTER 10

THE SENSE-MAKING INSTANCES ACROSS SITUATIONS

The goal of this chapter is to reflect upon the qualitative and quantitative results for each of the coding schemes for specific sense-making instances of engaging with a gendered media product. In the preceding results chapters, the analysis was presently chiefly by comparing men and women within each of the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations. In this chapter, the results of these comparisons will be compared across these four situations for each sense-making instance.

Any patterns or singularities found in the qualitative quotes are examined and compared with the quantitative divergings and convergings found in the statistical and illustrative tests. These results are discussed as they replicate prevailing gender stereotypes, and/or challenge them by being more about the interviewee's personal preference, some aspect of the situation, or more often a combination of the two. After each sense-making instance is discussed separately, the sense-making instances are discussed in terms of overall divergings and convergings occurring across the coding schemes and four situations.

Across Situations, Within Sense-Making Instances

Why Gendered. For all the different strategies discussed as to how the interviewees interpreted their media product as gendered, the results of the quantitative differences cannot be easily analyzed as stereotypical or counter-stereotypical. However, when these results are combined with the patterns

discussed for the qualitative results, we can see how stereotypes enter and are contested in people's interpretings.

Men and women were rather equal in discussing Seeing the Features for their strategy, with the one exception noted below, and the features they mentioned for differentiating between masculine and feminine media products replicate preexisting stereotypes. However, interpreting the features in stereotypical ways does not mean the interviewees were duped by the nature/nurture structure to passively regurgitate such information. A number of men and women called such interpretings stereotypical, represented here by Chad and Alice:

> "The girls in the original series are either a) tomboys or b) *stereotypically* girly: plus, the male characters outnumbered them, gestalt shows that the show was made with male interest in mind."
>   --Chad, *Digimon*

> "90% of the characters were girls and the characters were adorable ponies…it was practically a living girly-girl *stereotype.*"
>   --Chad, *My Little Pony*

> "The focus on relationships, and the *stereotypical* vision on men, as heroes to rescue the damsel in distress."
>   --Alice, romance novels

Answering these questions was the first chance for the interviewees to make observations that reflect upon and/or challenge stereotyping, but they were not the only occasions. For a number of codes, for this scheme and the How Saw Gender scheme, men and women pointed out that what they were saying was stereotypical, including feeling ashamed for having made such comments. As the How Saw Gender was designed to elicit reflection on stereotypes, this topic will be returned to for that discussion.

While both men and women discussed men's facing social stigma if they engaged with something meant for women under the Hearing from Others strategy, the percentage of men saying such in the Meant for Women Used Once situation was higher. Given the nature of the type of media product they said they were engaging with, this finding does fit with a stereotypical expectation. With the discourse that surrounds men's engaging with feminine media products, we would expect men to mention such fears more when engaging with such products. Such a product used only once is a product the man felt he had no reason to engage with

again. If the man had another, more personal reason to continue engaging with such a product, then he may have been able to dispel fears of stigmatization by providing a rationalization to counter them. Without such a reason, the interpretive stance of the individual may have been more focused on gender issues, prompting this explanation for why the media product is gendered to surface. Thus, it was most likely not just the gender stereotype being present, or the situation being Meant for Women Used Once, but an interaction of these variables, including the reasons the individual had for not engaging with the product more.

Similarly, for women in the Meant for Women Used Once situation, they were more likely to point out the stereotyped features in Seeing the Features. Identity salience concepts would predict that gender is an important interpretive issue in the reception of a media text when the individual's own gender is represented so as to draw attention to itself (MacKinnon, 2002). However, if this was universally the case, then men should have said more male stereotyped features in the Meant for Men situations, and women should have said more in both Meant for Women situations. As it was, only the situation in which women responded in some way unfavorably toward the media product, to the extent that they did not use the product again, appears to have triggered this higher percentage.

It appears that women who do not like the media product may be more likely to interpret the product as being stereotyped, perhaps because it represents gender stereotypes they themselves dislike, disagree with, or even outright criticize. Given the traditionally positive portrayal of male gender stereotypes in the sociocultural environment, such a reaction would not be expected in the Meant for Men Used Once situation, and, as will be seen below, perhaps not at all. Naturally, to be certain of these links, an in-depth qualitative analysis would be necessary to compare this frequency with discussion of disliking the stereotype – as the example from Alice above illustrates is possible.

As the Meant for Women situations triggered different interpretive stances, likewise women discussed more general assumptions about socially sanctioned behaviors for women during both Meant for Women situations under the Knowing Men, Women strategy. In a related way, men mentioned looking around more to see

what other men were doing, as the Seeing Others strategy, in Meant for Men Used Repeatedly situation. I mention both of these results simultaneously in that they potentially reflect a desire to see if such a repeated engaging with the media product would be seen as appropriate by others. For men, who were more likely to discuss the fear of stigmatization, these same individuals may have been more focused on seeing what other men were doing. For women, who were more tuned into gender stereotypes, seen again in How Saw Gender, the same desire in men could be found in women focusing on social appropriateness. Of course, both of these suppositions are based on the potential for the interconnectedness of the sense-making instances, which is not the focus of this study. Again, the results suggest a direction for future analysis.

Along with the discussion of situation triggering gendered interpretings, there are also examples of interpretings being non-gendered despite occurring in situations when gender would be prevalent. Under the Looking at Self strategy, the interpretings were focused on the individual's personal preferences for the media product – what I liked, what I didn't like – and less about what was liked as being aligned or resistant to stereotypical expectations. While both said they personally did not like a media product Used Once, whether cross-gender or same-gender, both men and women said they personally liked a cross-gender media product with which they repeatedly engaged because they in some way wanted to be like or do something traditionally only the other gender could. While not all the men and women counted in the quantitative results said this, those that did represent how personal preferences and not gender stereotypes can be more present and involved in a situation when the media product being engaged with is not necessarily meant for you.

Why Initiated. While some of the quantitative results can be seen as stereotyped, it is in combination with the qualitative responses that the role of the stereotypes in the individual's interpretive stance is understandable. The type of media engaging situation, used to elicit unique recollections, appears implicated in certain gendered interpretive stances. Those reasons for initiating an engaging that met stereotyped expectations had people involved in what led to the initiation, and

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the people involved could be predicted by which of the four Gendered Media Engaging Situations for which the recollection was elicited.

For media products in Meant for Men Used Once, women were more likely to say they were Brought to It by male family members or romantic partners, while men were more likely to say they Went with Another who tended to be male friends. For their repeated cross-genderings, men were more likely to say they Went with Another if with this other person was female family member or romantic partner, while women likewise said they went more with another if the person was a male family member or romantic partner. For these divergings, the people being cited as involved in what led to the engaging matched with the interviewee's interpretation of for whom the media product was meant.

However, we cannot assume causality; in the previous sense-making instance, when Seeing Others, those seen engaging with the media product matched the interviewee's gendered interpretation of the product. What is unclear is if the people involved in getting the interviewee engaged with the media product added to this perception as for whom the media product was intended. These codes would have to be compared to investigate such an interconnection. Either way, the connection between which gender led the interviewee to what type of media product, elicited by the interview's structure, is stereotypically expected on both qualitative and quantitative levels.

A second set of findings also seem to match stereotypical expectations about what would lead men and women to engage with gendered media products. On strictly the quantitative level, more men saying they desired to satisfy an interest in a media product Meant for Men Used Repeatedly meets our expectations, as women would not be expected to be as interested in something not meant for their gender. Similarly, more women saying they sought out the information in media products Meant for Women Used Repeatedly is understandable, as there should be nothing of informational value in such products for traditionally constructed men. However, on the qualitative level, how these desires were discussed does not mention such gender assumptions. Instead, they are focused on describing the interviewees' personal preferences and situational needs. Such discussion was also found in

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those few cases of cross-gendering that involved the person saying the media product was initiated with for Satisfied or Sought Out reasons. Thus while the quantitative results can point to stereotypical results, the qualitative discussion from unique interviewees were more focused on individualized, situational concerns.

How Volitional. Along with How Saw Gender below, How Volitional the initial engaging was interpreted can easily be seen demonstrating stereotypical results on both the quantitative and qualitative levels. However, even though stereotypes were seen on both levels, so were results that did not match such expectations.

It would be expected for women to say they felt their engaging to be imposed upon them in both of their cross-gender engagings, but not when they were also more likely to say this in their same-gender engagings.   In the reverse, it is stereotypical for only women to say their engaging with media products Meant for Women Used once was voluntary, but it is far less stereotypical when all other situations saw relatively equal mentions. For women in Meant for Women Used Repeatedly, and for men in the Meant for Men situations, their interpretings would be expected; but they were not be expected for the cross-genderings. All of these non-stereotypical results require further qualitative analysis to discern how the interviewee's reasons for and benefits from engaging with media product may be connected with these interpretings.

Then there is the case of men and their tendency to mention more all the variations of Just Happened in the Meant for Women situations. In one way, this tendency can be seen as stereotypical. Men overall may not want to be seen as voluntarily choosing to engage with something seen by them, and by the sociocultural environment, as meant for women. On the other hand, this result is not exactly matching stereotypical expectations; if it was seen as meant for women, why not just say the engagings were imposed?

Instead, it appears some of the men were performing a balancing act. Based on their interpretation of the media product, and perhaps the interview as being conducted by a woman, these men may not want to seem too feminine as to totally voluntarily choose, but also not too misogynist to say that women forced them to engage with these things. Of course, this is only one interpretation, and placing

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these responses into context with the other sense-making instances would flesh out how the situation of gendered media engaging was faced by the men who indicated the engaging was something that just happened to them as they were going about their lives. If this tendency was the result of the interview situation, then this pattern presents an empirical question to be addressed in future studies.

Why Stopped/Continued. As with the reasons for what led the men and women to initially engage with the media product, the reasons given for why they stopped or continued to engage with it can similarly be seen as stereotyped, especially by combining the quantitative and qualitative results.

Two overall gender patterns can be interpreted as stereotypical: men and Deciding to Spend Time; women and Being Able. For men, this pattern may reflect the masculine desire to take command of a situation, which was also hinted at in the How Helped answers. For women, this pattern could reflect a feminine characteristic of worrying about being able to perpetuate an engaging. However, both of these reasons become equalized when the media product was Meant for Women Used Repeatedly. Did men suddenly no longer desire to control the situation, and women no longer worry about being able to perpetuate the engaging? The break in the pattern suggests the entire pattern needs to be examined in combination with the other sense-making instances to better understand what led to these divergings.

As mentioned with the Why Gendered sense-making instance, men again said they did not continue engaging with something Meant for Women due to concern over stigmatization from their peers or society at large. However, they did not say this more than women also discussed Sensed Appropriate for that situation; for women, they were told by others not to engage with that product. This sense of appropriateness also compelled women not to engage with something Meant for Men Used Once, although in that situation there was some discussion of the stigmatization concern. Thus, while a cross-gender media engaging with something used once may reflect gender stereotypes, especially for men, this is not completely the case for women, who also sensed engaging with same-gender media products to be inappropriate if they were told so directly.

Again, aligned with the Why Gendered and Why Initiated sense-making instances, the reasoning behind Being with Others reflects the same gender divide. For both men and women, cross-gendering with media products used repeatedly saw each respectively to be more likely to mention continuing because they had someone to be with who was of the gender targeted by the product. But just from this sense-making instance causality cannot be inferred. Did they continue to engage with that media product if they had someone of the targeted gender to join them from the beginning, or did they seek out someone of that gender so as to have a reason to continue engaging?

For the first to occur, we would expect to see the interviewee to be brought to that media product by a person of the matching gender, which could be seen as a characteristic of the situation. For the second to occur, we would expect the individual's personal preferences for the product, combined with a sense that it was only meant for the other gender, to compel them to seek out the matching gender in order to justify their repeated engaging. These are only two options; a more in-depth analysis would most likely reveal more complications. However, any complications would still be analyzable as the individual interpreting the characteristics of the situation and the media product and moving forward based on those interpretations.

The influence of personal preferences can also be seen in how men and women were relatively equal in their mentions for Reacting Well and Preferring the Content across the situations. Their qualitative discussions focused on their evaluations of the media products based on personal criteria for what is liked, attractive, and worthwhile.   How the interviewee saw his or her self also related to the type of situation being faced. Men said media products Meant for Women Used Once were less likely to relate to own lives when these reasons were couched as personal preferences, philosophies and views on what was happening at that time. The responses would be expected, as men should not be able to see how feminine media products can relate to their lives. Similarly for women as they said media products Meant for Women Used Repeatedly were more able to relate to their own selves for personal reasons.

However, women said the same things if Meant for Men Used Repeatedly, which would not be expected. Additionally, men were relatively equal with women in Meant for Women Used Repeatedly for seeing such product connecting with what was going on in their lives at the time. These cross-gendering results challenge stereotypical expectations because they focus more on the personal preferences and interpretations of what was happening in their lives at the time of the engaging.

How Helped. While the divergings that occurred for this sense-making instance can be seen as stereotypical, the fact that so few divergings occurred is itself evidence of non-stereotypical engagings. Overall, regardless of who the media product was meant for, it could be helpful to either men or women as determined by what the individual was experiencing at the time of the engaging.

Only two divergings showed a cross-gendering that resulted in a help classifiable as expected based on gender stereotypes. Women indicated more Got Togetherness than men when engaging with a media product Meant for Men Used Repeatedly. Given that women were also more likely to say they had initially engaged with the product to spend time with a man, and that they continued to engage with such a product because they had men in their lives to share the engaging with, women also saying they were helped by bonding with the men in their lives fits this pattern. Men in Meant for Women Used Repeatedly were more likely than women to say they Got Control. Again there is the stereotype of men desiring to be in command, seen in their discussions to steer away from a bad situation in the future or to know exactly what was happening around them.

However, both of these cross-gendering results only occurred in the Used Repeatedly instance; in the Used Once situation, men and women were relatively equal in mentioning such helps. If gender was the overarching determinant in how the helps would be prevalent across these situations, then the results from the one cross-gendering should have occurred in the other.

The same can be said of those divergings that occurred in the same-genderings. We would expect men to receive more Got Hows, Methods and Kept Going, Made Progress than women when the media product engaged with was seen as meant for men, but this only occurred when it was something engaged with

repeatedly. Similarly stereotypical is women receiving more than men the following when engaging with something meant for women: Got Pictures, Ideas; Got Hows, Methods; Got Human Togetherness; and, Got Started, Motivated. However, this was only with something used once.

It appears that gender does not supersede the situated engaging with media products as to how those engagings can be useful to the individual in that or subsequent lived situations. However, gender may arise interpretively in the individual. Perhaps it is not that women mentioned those helps more in the Meant for Women Used Once, but that men mentioned them less because of how they saw the media product. Similarly for women in the Meant for Men Used Repeatedly; Got Human Togetherness so closely matches the gender stereotype that it could have been interpreted as an appropriate help. Such interpretations could have occurred at the time of the engaging, or, more likely, during the interview process. If it was at the time of the engaging, a more thorough analysis of the entire interview could reveal this. If it was at the time of the interview, then this possibility will have to be considered and tested in future applications of the interview.

How Saw Gender. This sense-making instance was designed to measure how often the men and women discussed what is appropriate for men versus women; thus, it was designed to elicit gender stereotypes as seen occurring within the engagings with gendered media products. Thus, it is not surprising that both men and women, across the different types of codes in this scheme, directly called such interpretings stereotypes. Whether it was just seeing men and women too different:

> "I guess at time my idea of gender roles was a little bit different, and I guess it did kinda fit into the *stereotype* of women are at home, men are out having these adventures…"
>   --Barbara, cowboy movies

> "The movie, while being a bit more feminist, still heavily reinforced gender *stereotypes*. Men were action driven, action oriented, women were damsels-in-distress, even when they begged not to be and told the men they were being stupid. The men were still headstrong, went off and did whatever they pleased."
>   --Ted, *Beauty and the Beast*

Or in seeing some type of imbalance between men and women, such that some things are more appropriate or more apparent for the one than the other.

"I think in general a lot of things that are more girl oriented are the romantic, lovey-dovey things that can be termed corny a lot of the times… But I think that is the *stereotype* of things geared towards women and girls. I mean, I do like other things that I think guys would say are corny."
   --Jeanne, Lifetime movies

"It isn't a *stereotypical* guy movie. I don't think they'd be frowned upon by watching it, but showing an extreme interest in it would start raising questions."
   --Nicole, Disney's *The Little Mermaid*

"And again this is *horribly sexist of me and I know and all that PC crap,* but I believe that the guy should be the hero for the woman if at all possible. And if she's in trouble, he should be there for her and stand up for her, be the hero."
   --Franklin, scary movies

"Well again, I just think it's the kind of thing that women like because they're supposed to and men don't because they don't. That kind of social commodity that just *fits into stereotype* perfectly, and women seem to enjoy it."
   --Zane, *Love Actually*

These views on gender broke down by the gender of the interviewee and the type of gendered media engaging situation.

Across all the situations, women were more likely than men to focus on some type of imbalance between men and women. This pattern was seen especially in the quantitative results, as they had at least one diverging in their favor for all but Men Pressed Down, for which men were only higher in Meant for Women Used Repeatedly – a result that is itself stereotypical. This tendency for women would be expected given the effect the feminist movement has had in the United States over the past three decades to illuminate these imbalances and encourage women to actively confront and resist them in attempts to increase the range of possibilities for the modern woman (Ang, 1996; Jacobson, 2005). Indeed there are examples within the codes for this sense-making instance that show women challenging traditional stereotypes they saw being represented in media products, both those meant for men and for women.

"The male characters were more in power than the female characters were featured in the movies. *Not like my own what is appropriate for men versus women,* but it also kinda shows how society views what is appropriate for men, which is like to be masculine, the leading person, and the women always being behind the scenes."
   --Eileen, *Rambo* movies

"*I thought that the books were slightly degrading to women* in that all we ever want in life is to find a wonderful husband and get married and have babies. And so in that sense *I thought that the books were off on what the gender norms*

should be and are because they just presented loved stories and not career women or not women who had other goals in life."
    --Isabel, romance novels

How frequently such challenging occurred was not measured, so comparing men and women on their resistance to such stereotypes is not possible at this time.

Men, on the other hand, were more likely to discuss what was appropriate for men in engagings with media products meant for them, what was inappropriate for men in engagings with items seen meant for women (although only diverging from women In Meant for Women Used Repeatedly), and their tendency to mention that men and women were the same but different simultaneously. As indicated by Ang and other feminists, it is probable that for women the issue of gender itself is salient, and as such they were more likely to discuss the various imbalances across the situations.

However, for men, gender is rarely discussed as a problem for them; being socioculturally and historically the dominant gender, rarely has it been discussed that they have a gender, let alone that it may be constructed and in problematic ways (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2006; Jhally, 1999). This lack of direct address results in the tendency for men not to react to gender stereotypes the same way women do (ex. Brenick, Henning, Killen, O'Connor & Collins, 2007). For them, they may be more likely to only have a gendered interpretive stance, and thus to discuss gender, in situations when there are implications for what is appropriate or inappropriate for men. This was seen in men's seeing what was inappropriate in their Meant for Women situations. Overall, something about the situation being gendered, and the individual's response to it as such, is related to the individual's tendency to interpret/perform in gendered ways.

This gendered interpretive stance can also be seen in how much more likely the men were to say gender was not an issue in the Meant for Women situations, along with making less gender statements overall in these cross-gender engagings. Given that men were also relatively lower in making such gender statements in Meant for Men Used Once, this finding could be explained as men were just more likely to discuss in-depth the Meant for Men Used Repeatedly situation. As this was

the only coding scheme to count all mentions of a particular code, the men perhaps did not want to talk about the other recollections as much.

However, another explanation is possible when considering the pattern that occurred with How Volitional. It was said for that pattern that men perhaps did not want to appear brutish, either at the time of the engaging or during the interview. If that is true, then perhaps the same interpretive process is behind the tendency for men to say gender was not an issue, especially in the Meant for Women situations. They may have been attempting to either rationalize to themselves their engaging with a feminine media product by saying gender was not an issue in their engaging with it. Rather than, or perhaps simultaneously to, these may have been thoughts voiced only in the interview so as to appear more amenable to a female interviewer. Examining if these codes occurred with the Just Happened codes would be the first step to understanding this intriguing pattern.

Across Sense-Making Instances and Situations

Multiple sense-making instances could have more than one code within the Gendered Media Engaging Situations. For this reason, to produce fair and comparable evaluations, all codes for all sense-making instances were considered to be locations in which to compare men and women. Overall, across all coding schemes, there were 208 locations in which to find possible gender differences. Within these locations, 35.1% saw divergings, meaning 64.9% saw convergings. However, as indicated in each chapter, some of these convergings were due to no codes being mentioned in a particular situation. Removing these from the equation means overall the rate of convergings was 59.6% compared to the rate of divergings at 35.1%. Thus, in all the different ways measured for men and women to differ in their engaging with media products, men and women were in fact more alike than different if they are compared on the step-by-step interpretive/performative processing of the engaging.

For many of the divergings, they occurred in ways predicted by or reflecting upon gender stereotypes. These results appear especially true if gender was implicated in the sense-making instance or the specific code. Thus for How Saw

Gender, the divergings were so frequent that this was the only scheme where they outnumbered the convergings. Along with the men in How Volitional, men and women in How Saw Gender were reacting in ways contingent upon how they saw themselves as gendered. Why Initiated and Why Stopped, Continued saw many divergings due to ideas about who the media product was meant for, and thus who the interviewee saw also engaging with the media product with them. Given that Why Gendered had gender as integrated into it as How Saw Gender, it should be as divergent. It was, for similar reasons discussed regarding men's views on gender stereotypes.

Finally, the sense-making instance with the least divergings was How Helped. Given the nature of what this question, and thus the coding scheme, measure, this finding is not surprising. The coding schemed measured how the person was able to utilize some aspect of the engaging in his or her life, whether immediately in the situation the media product was integrated into, or at some later point. This means the types of helps reflect what was needed as a function of the person facing the features of a situation. Unless gender was implicated as an important factor in the situation, or the gender of the media product was interpretively overwhelming, then the characteristics of the situation as the individual saw them would determine more the help, or the use, or the effect, received from the engaging.

Overall, the results of the convergings and divergings across the qualitative and quantitative analyses demonstrate a mixture of meeting stereotypical expectations and of resulting from interactions between personal preferences and situational characteristics. For either, how gender is seen and activated as an interpretive stance appears to mediate or moderate the type of response in the sense-making instance during a gendered media engaging. A more in-depth analysis of the interconnections of the sense-making instances would illustrate this role of the gendered interpretive stance, and tell us more about gender commonalities and gender differences.

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSIONS

Around every male and female individual is a sociocultural environment that circulates messages through the media. To varying degrees, these messages propagate norms on what are the appropriate internal and external behaviors for those individuals classified as "men" and those classified as "women". Individuals can choose to what extent they will accept these norms and act upon them in their everyday lives. Some individuals choose to accept these norms unquestioningly, thereby aligning themselves with what the society and/or culture structures as appropriate. Others may resist these norms, others may negotiate with them, but none can deny that the norms exist.

Among all these norms can be found guidelines for what media products to engage with as the individual moves through life. These guidelines are based on common features the media have and how those features are linked with what is deemed appropriate for men versus women. Thus, those who accept the norms about appropriateness would be more expected to engage with media meant for them, while less willing to engage as fully with media not meant for them. Same-gender media engagings would be expected to have been initiated more willingly and to be seen as more useful to the person's everyday life, especially if it is a media product repeatedly returned to.

This first analysis of a data corpus of interviews interrogating people's engaging with gendered media products provides evidence on how both men and women can be interpreted by us as accepting the hegemonic construction of gender,

but at the same time there is evidence to show how what matters more is their interpretive and performative reactions to situations being faced. All the while, there is also ample evidence suggesting how we consider gender in our media studies matters in how we understand gender to impact the results of those studies.

Gender differences, gender commonalities

Pragmatically, the goal of this study was to explore the utility of investigating a person's engagement with a particular media product not as an aggregate but as a series of situated sense-making instances that holistically combine to form an engaging process. Deconstructing a person's experience with a media product was done to see if this approach would provide a different perspective on how gender becomes integrated or implicated in the engaging process. Common approaches previously focused on aggregate or hypothetical measures of exposure. It was believed that situating and deconstructing exposure would show the overarching sociodemographic category less determinant in the engaging process than other more personal, situational and ultimately interpretive factors.

The results did favor this deconstructive approach; across the sense-making instances there tended to be more similarity than difference in how men and women selected, interpreted and utilized gendered media products. This indicates that throughout the process of engaging with gendered media, men and women were more alike than different in how they saw the media product as gendered, what influenced their engaging with the media product, and how the media product related to their lives.

Selecting a cross-gender product to discuss did appear more stereotypical. There was evidence that the women were engaging more in masculinized products than men were in feminized products. Women may be more likely to cross that gendered line due to the current sociocultural environment that permits greater flexibility in what they can do, which includes transversing traditional gender stereotypes (Ang, 1996). Men, on the other hand, do not have the same freedom to move, as reflected in those who discussed sensing it was inappropriate to engage with media meant for women. The fear of social stigmatization, from peers and

society at large, remains more prevalent in the men of this culture (Jhally, 1999). While there may not be any "logical barrier" to prevent men from such cross-gender transgressions (Mackinnon, 2002), from the perspective of the men in the study, there are still interpretive barriers, based on their perspective on the sociocultural environment, that may preclude them from such engagings.

However, analyzing specific sense-making instances of the engaging process with these media products revealed that both men's and women's cross-gender engagings can be similar to their same-gender engagings in what led to the engaging, what led to the perpetuation of the engaging, and how the engaging was seen as helpful. The results from the sense-making instances of selectings, interpretings and utilizings analyses provided evidence that differences and similarities can be as much explained by gender stereotypes as by individualized lived experiences understood through an interpretive stance. In some aspects of the engaging process, how the individual interpreted his or her gender, the gender of the media product, and how gender was operating in the situation can all be influential, separately or interactively, on impacting the resultant discussion of that sense-making instance. Yet there are also indicators that what influenced the emergence of a particular response in a sense-making instance was a result of personal preference, of interpreting the structural factors of the situation being faced, and the negotiation of these two factors.

Gender as interpretive frame

Theoretically, this work was an attempt to construct a media reception study concerning an oft used variable and phenomenon of interest by conceptualizing gender not as the static imposition of the nature/nurture structure. Instead, gender was conceptualized as a fluid, dynamic process of interpretation and performance in regard to the nature/nurture structure as embodied in the structure of experienced situations. It was believed that gender would enter into the engaging with media products through the information the individual drew upon to make these situated interpretive/performative acts. In the end, a gendered interpretive stance would be

most clearly seen if men and women continued to differ in their engaging process in ways that could be explained as aligning with existent gender stereotypes.

Some convergings and divergings did occur due to views on gender that can be taken as indications of the hegemonic influence of the sociocultural environment on the individual, either at the time of the engaging or at the time of the interview. However, this does not mean that the individual was simply regurgitating the information received and completely adhering to the meaning of those messages. The analysis in this study was focused on illustrating the strategies discussed for selecting, interpreting and utilizing these gendered media products. The study did not go into depth on the strategies that would represent how the person is accepting, negotiating or rejecting these messages as meaningful for his or her life. Such an analysis would be akin to the work done by those applying Hall's Encoding/Decoding model (Hall, 1973/1993; Morley, 1992), and is planned for another study to be conducted with this data corpus.

Even without such a deep analysis, there was evidence of such negotiating in some of the statements, particularly in those sense-making instances for which thoughts and feelings about gender were directly elicited. When men and women discussed what led them to see a media product as gendered, and then how they saw what was appropriate for either gender in the engaging with that media product, there were men and women who reflected on their statements as being stereotypes, on being something they disagree with, and feeling horrible for saying such things. Such statements are the surface level of how to understand the strategy of dealing with gender in these engagings. As I read through these interviews, I noticed a variety of strategies that complicated the traditional three strategies of dominant, negotiated, and resisted from used in Encoding/Decoding research. Because the situations being discussed by the individuals could occur over a larger span of time/space than just the engaging with the media product, more than one strategy could be seen, and at times they were contradicting one another.

Further understanding these strategies, as well as the stereotyped results found in the convergings and divergings, would add to our understanding of the theoretical framework used to construct this study. Investigating media use

situationally does appear to be a worthy way of illuminating how gender is interpreted and then performed based on the person's interaction with that situation. In some cases, if the person's sense of gender and what is appropriate is highlighted for him or her within the situation, then the individual may be more likely to act, either automatically or by choice, in ways that reflect the person's gender identity (McQuail, 1997). If the person at the time of the situation agrees completely with the norms, then he or she may act in ways we as observers would interpret more as stereotypical. However, if the person at the time disagrees to any extent, then we may find this individual behaving in ways that are on some level resistant. These are the strategies that require further study.

While we can find in the sense-making instances convergings and divergings that both meet stereotypes and counter stereotypes, and the holistic level may tip to one or the other, the picture is more complicate than just one or the other. Just because one or more sense-making instances reflects a gender stereotype does not mean all interpretive/performative acts do, or that holistically the aggregate process of engaging is stereotyped in what the end result will be. Indeed, even if on the surface the sense-making instance appears to have a stereotypical converging or diverging between men and women, more in-depth analysis of what was said, and how it relates to other sense-making instances and what was said there, can illustrate how the stereotypical is in fact something else. Stereotyped results found in studies focusing on aggregate or hypothetical engagings are probably due to the lack of incorporating the interpretive stance. Approaching a study of gender interpretively and disempowering the research, as called for by Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology, appears less likely to replicate such findings.

Many examples of convergings and divergings apparently occurred without the influence of gender. There were responses to aspects of the engaging process that appeared to reflect the individual acting without the gendered interpretive stance having been activated by the characteristics of the media product and/or the engaging. At times the individual's own preference for the media product, not as a man or a woman but as an individual human being, influenced what led to the engaging and its perpetuation. Overwhelmingly, the nature of the situation being

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faced at the time of the engaging, as interpreted by the individual, appears to have had the most influence over how helpful, or what effect, the media product had in that person's life.

This prevalence of personal preferences and interactions with situational characteristics provide evidence that men and women, when not considered as gendered but as sense-making individuals dealing with the ups and downs of life, can find common ground, whether it is with media products meant for women or media products meant for men. That in cases when gender is not salient, and/or when the individual does not react to gendered cues with a gendered interpretive stance, men and women can find common ground in the media they use, why they use it, and how helpful it can be. This finding supports Ien Ang's assertion that…

> "…we should not overlook the fact that not all women are attracted to melodrama, or not always, and that some men can be moved by melodrama, too. If anything, this fact suggests that femininity and masculinity are not enduring subject positions inhabited inevitably by biological women and men, but that identity is transitory, the temporary result of dynamic identifications." (1996, p.96)

When a person's gendered interpretive stance is not activated by some external clue – such as a gendered media product, or the question of an interview – then there is no filter to divide internal and external behavior into masculine or feminine. There is only an individual facing life, interpreting it as someone trying to make sense of it all.

Sense-Making and media reception studies

Methodologically, this study was a further application of Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology to media studies, and particularly to the reception of media products as being recollections of situated experiences. Dervin's methodology was used to structure these interviews as it matched my theoretical desire to be interpretive, situated and focusing on the sense-making instances of the engaging process. Prior to this study, experiences with computer and video games were likewise explored situationally, which did complicate traditional notions about the gender gap seen in this specific type of media engaging (Reinhard & Dervin, 2007). Overall, the results for this study point to the usefulness of methodologically employing situationality and the sense-making instances to interrupt common findings about gender and engaging with media products.

The methodology's strength is most apparent in the results for utilizings, the Helps codes. This coding scheme was taken directly from previous SMM work; naturally it would fit with the analysis for this study. This coding scheme has been created, tested, recreated, and retested to embody the SMM principle of focusing on the verbs rather than the nouns of a person's experience with a situation. Thus, this coding scheme was best able to show gender entering into this aspect of the engaging process. The other coding schemes were constructed to replicate this focus away from nouns, but those schemes have not had the chance to be as thoroughly tested as the Helps coding scheme. I am not saying this lacking of the other schemes is a determinant in how the convergings and divergings were found in them. It is a limitation to consider for the future: how to tighten the schemes to better reflect the principles of other SMM schemes so as to be more comparable.

However, the triumvirate of interpretive, situated and sense-making instances did indicate an approach to understanding gender in media engagings that was useful in both indicating the conditionality of gender differences and the role of gender as an interpretive frame as the person deals with his or her life. Future in-depth analysis will utilize more the SMM approach to analysis to further illuminate this conditionality, the gendered interpretive stance, and what both have to say about the individual-as-agent dealing with the structures of his or her lived experiences and the sociocultural environment that surrounds it all.

Because SMM is a methodology that after data collection advocates both qualitative and quantitative analyses, there are many approaches that can be taken in the future with this data corpus. However, before either such analytic pass, I plan to fix two shortcomings. First, to fix the small numbers in this data corpus, I would incorporate some of the other interviews not included in this sample because they were self-interviews, or answers to open-ended questionnaires. Second, to verify my coding schemes have the same requirements as other SMM schemes, I would bring in other coders to gather intercoder reliability.

With such shortcomings resolved, additional quantitative and qualitative work would further illuminate the findings and suggestions from this study's analysis. Statistical analyses would more thoroughly investigate the comparisons between

men and women, and how much they are influenced by other factors, such as sociodemographic, situational, and interpretive. In-depth qualitative analyses could focus on more sense-making instances, and reveal more about how all sense-making instances are interconnected within an individual's engaging with a particular gendered media product. In-depth reads would reveal overall strategies, fraught with both coalescences and contradictions. These reads could also be the basis for statistical regression and model analyses to show how overarching factors converge to predict some outcome of the engaging process. In turn, discrepancies from any statistical model could be more thoroughly analyzed in relation to the statistical average.

Any of these approaches for future studies would usefully build upon what began with this SMM media reception study. The strength of SMM for this line of work is again shown in that all of these analytical approaches are possible given the nature of the data corpus. This study was merely one research question, focusing on only seven aspects of four different engaging processes that resulted in hours of interviews for only forty-three men and women. The amount and quality of results generated are a prelude to what is possible, both with this data corpus and with SMM as an approach to media reception studies.

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APPENDIX A:

INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

SMM INTERVIEW TYPE: MICRO-ELEMENT INTERVIEW
FOCUS: GENDERED MEDIA ENGAGINGS

What we are going to talk about are your experiences with materials and contents that come to you via any mass media -- television shows and movies of any kind, video and computer games, music of any kind, internet sites, newspaper and magazine content of any kind, novels, comics and graphic books, and radio shows of any kind.

You have probably noticed that some things that come to you in the media are more directed to one gender -- some seem meant for or directed to men or boys while some seem meant for or directed to women or girls.

We want you to tell us how you see these kinds of media -- the kind you see as being directed to one gender or the other, and how you have experienced them in your life.

TIME COMMITMENT: APPROX 90-120 MINUTES

SECTION A: LIFE-LINE OF EXPERIENCES WITH GENDERED MEDIA
TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO INTERVIEW

Below is a chart that we want you to fill in with your media experiences. It is followed by an example chart filled in by someone else. The questions that follow after the example chart tell you how to fill in the four columns of the chart.   You can go back and forth between columns as you remember things. You can add as many rows as needed for your answers, and as you proceed with the interview you can add new items to the chart as they come to your memory.

	COLUMN 1 **MEDIA FOR MEN AND BOYS -- USED ONCE ONLY**	**COLUMN 2** **MEDIA FOR MEN AND BOYS -- USED MULTIPLE TIMES**	**COLUMN 3** **MEDIA FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS -- USED ONCE ONLY**	**COLUMN 4** **MEDIA FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS -- USED MULTIPLE TIMES**
Approximate age when first had contact				

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A CHART FILLED IN BY A FEMALE:

Approximate age when first had contact	COLUMN 1 MEDIA FOR MEN AND BOYS -- USED ONCE ONLY	COLUMN 2 MEDIA FOR MEN AND BOYS -- USED MULTIPLE TIMES	COLUMN 3 MEDIA FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS -- USED ONCE ONLY	COLUMN 4 MEDIA FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS -- USED MULTIPLE TIMES
3		Science fiction, starting with Star Wars		Strawberry Shortcake, girlie cartoons
7		Paranormal horror, starting with Twilight Zone		
10		Action movies, starting with Die Hard		
11		Football		All My Children, day soap opera
12		Technology & science shows	Romance novels	Seventeen, teen girl magazines
13	First person shooter games	Clive Clussler novels		Modern Disney princess cartoons
14		Superhero comics		
15	Professional wrestling	Dungeons & Dragons, fighting games	Gone with the Wind, other melodramatic films	The Sound of Music style musicals
17				Romantic comedies, especially old ones
17				Jane Austen novels, movies
18			South Pacific style musicals	ER, night soap operas
20	Slasher movies, like Halloween, Scream			
22	Pornography		Disney's Cinderella, Snow White	
27				Marie Claire, women's magazines
29		Reality shows like Top Gear, Ghost Hunters		

The term "media product" below refers to media objects like magazines, television shows, films, video games, music, books, and so forth. The term does not refer to other things we would buy -- like shampoo, food, cars, etc. A media product could be a commercial, but then I'd be looking to know more about your experience with the commercial, and not with the product that is being advertised.

1. MEDIA FOR MEN OR BOYS: USED ONLY ONCE
Now think back over your life. I'd like you to list for me the specific media products that you see as having been directed primarily to **men or boys** that you've used <u>once and only once in your life, things you just never went back to.</u>

> Think back in time to the first of these media products you used, and add to the list as you travel through time to today listing media products for your entire life span. You can list specific names or just general types of media products, or whatever makes sense to you depending on your experiences.

2. MEDIA FOR MEN OR BOYS, USED MULTIPLE TIMES
Now think back over your life. I'd like you to list for me the specific media products that you see as having been directed primarily to **men or boys** that you used <u>repeatedly over time in your life, things you kept going back to.</u>

> Think back in time to the first of these media products you used, and add to the list as you travel through time to today listing media products for your entire life span. You can list specific names or just general types of media products, or whatever makes sense to you depending on your experiences.

3. MEDIA FOR WOMEN OR GIRLS, USE ONLY ONCE.
Now think back over your life. I'd like you to list for me the specific media products that you see as having been directed primarily to **women or girls** that you've used <u>once and only once in your life, things you just never went back to.</u>

> Think back in time to the first of these media products you used, and add to the list as you travel through time to today listing media products for your entire life span. You can list specific names or just general types of media products, or whatever makes sense to you depending on your experiences.

4. MEDIA FOR WOMEN OR GIRLS, USED MULTIPLE TIMES
Now think back over your life. I'd like you to list for me the specific media products that you see as having been directed primarily to **men or boys** that you used <u>repeatedly over time in your life, things you kept going back to.</u>

> Think back in time to the first of these media products you used, and add to the list as you travel through time to today listing media products for your entire life span. You can list specific names or just general types of media products, or whatever makes sense to you depending on your experiences.

SECTION B: IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF MEDIA FOR MEN AND BOYS, USED ONLY ONCE

*Look back now at your Column 1 list in your LIFE-LINE CHART in SECTION A. Circle the one specific example that stands out most in your mind, is important to you or memorable in some way. This can be a media product of any kind -- perhaps it's a movie, a TV show, a magazine, or something else. What specific media product **meant for men or boys that you've only used once** would you like to talk about?* REMEMBER TO CIRCLE INTERVIEWEE'S CHOICE.

5. WHY DIRECTED TO MEN OR BOYS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to say it was meant for men or boys?

> 5a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how are they similar?*

> 5b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how are they dissimilar?*

6. WHY NOT DIRECTED TO WOMEN OR GIRLS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to conclude that it is generally not directed to women or girls?

> 6a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how are they similar?*

> 6b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how are they dissimilar?*

7. WHY SOME WOMEN OR GIRLS ARE ATTRACTED?
Would you say any aspect of this media product appeals to other women or girls? If so, what?

> 7a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to the other media products in this column? If so, how are they similar?*

> 7b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to the other media products in this column? If so, how are they dissimilar?*

8. DESCRIPTION: *Think back now to the time you first encountered this media product. What was happening in your life that led you to this encounter?*

> 8a. ORIGINS: *Was your encounter with this media product something that just happened, you voluntarily journeyed into, or something imposed on you?*

8b. LIFE CONNECTION: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

8c. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with or connect in some way to how you saw, understood, were taught, or had a sense of what is appropriate, permissible for men versus women? If so, how?*

9. ONLY ONCE: *What explains to you why you did not come back to this media?*

9a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this reason as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

9b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this reason as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

10. QUESTIONS, MUDDLES: *Did your experience with this media at that time lead you to have any questions, muddles, confusions? If so, what?*

10a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

10b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

11. EMOTIONS, FEELINGS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any emotions, feelings? If so, what?*

11a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

11b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

12. IDEAS, CONCLUSIONS, THOUGHTS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any ideas, conclusions, thoughts? If so, what?*

12a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

12b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

13. SPECIAL LEARNINGS: *Did you learn anything from your experience with this media at that point in time? If so, what?*

> 13a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 13b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

14. HELP, FACILITATING: *Did your experience with this media help or facilitate you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this help?*

> 14a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these helps as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 14b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these helps as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

15. HURTS, HINDERS: *Did your experience with this media hurt or hinder you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this hurt?*

> 15a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 15b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

16. SENSE OF SELF: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time relate in any way to how you thought about yourself and your sense of self? If so, how?*

> 16a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this sense of self connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 16b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this sense of self as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

17. POWER: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to conclude, question, or wonder about power and how it operates in society, your family, or the world around you? If so, how?*

> 17a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this view on power connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

17b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this view on power as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

18. MEDIA CONNECTION: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time connect to your experiences with other media in the past or at that time? If so, how? What do you see as the connection?*

18a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

18b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

19a. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Let's go back to how you chose this media product as meant for men. Is there anything else you can tell me about why you say this media was meant for or appropriate for men versus women?*

19b. GENDER SIMILAR: *When you first encountered this media product, how did it represent, be similar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

19b. GENDER DISSIMILAR: *How was it unrepresentative or dissimilar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

20. MAGIC WAND: *If you could have waved a magic wand and changed any aspect of your experience with this media at that point in time, what would you have changed?*

SECTION C: MEDIA FOR MEN AND BOYS, USED MULTIPLE TIMES
*Look back now at your Column 2 list in your LIFE-LINE CHART in SECTION A. Circle the one specific example that stands out most in your mind, is important to you or memorable in some way. This can be a media product of any kind -- perhaps it's a movie, a TV show, a magazine, or something else. What specific media product **meant for men or boys that you've used multiple times** would you like to talk about?*
REMEMBER TO CIRCLE INTERVIEWEE'S CHOICE.

21. WHY TARGETED FOR MEN OR BOYS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to say it was meant for men or boys?

21a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

21b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

22. WHY NOT TARGETED FOR WOMEN OR GIRLS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to conclude that it is generally not directed to women or girls?

22a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

22b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

23. WHY SOME WOMEN OR GIRLS ARE ATTRACTED?
Would you say any aspect of this media appeals to other women or girls? If so, what?

23a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

23b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

24. DESCRIPTION: *Think back now to the time you first encountered this media product. What was happening in your life that led you to this encounter?*

24a. ORIGINS: *Was your encounter with this media product something that just happened, you voluntarily journeyed into, or something imposed on you?*

24b. LIFE CONNECTION: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

24c. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with or connect in some way to how you saw, understood, were taught or had a sense of what is appropriate for men versus women? If so, how?*

25. REPEATEDLY: *What explains to you why you repeatedly used this media?*

25a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this reason as connecting to your life? If so, how?*

25b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this reason as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women? If so, how?*

25c. CONNECTION CHANGE: *Did any aspect of this media product, either the content or the form, change in how it connected or resonated with your life as you continued to use it? If so, how?*

26. QUESTIONS, MUDDLES: *Did your experience with this media at that time lead you to have any questions, muddles, confusions? If so, what?*

26a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

26b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

27. EMOTIONS, FEELINGS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any emotions, feelings? If so, what?*

27a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

27b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

28. IDEAS, CONCLUSIONS, THOUGHTS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any ideas, conclusions, thoughts? If so, what?*

28a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

28b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

29. SPECIAL LEARNINGS: *Did you learn anything from your experience with this media at that point in time? If so, what?*

29a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

29b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

30. HELP, FACILITATING: *Did your experience with this media help or facilitate you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this help?*

30a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these helps as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

30b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these helps as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

31. HURTS, HINDERS: *Did your experience with this media hurt or hinder you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this hurt?*

> 31a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 31b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

32. SENSE OF SELF: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time relate in any way to how you thought about yourself and your sense of self? If so, how?*

> 32a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this sense of self connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 32b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this sense of self as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

33. POWER: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to conclude, question, or wonder about power and how it operates in society, your family, or the world around you? If so, how?*

> 33a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this view on power connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 33b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this view on power as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

34. MEDIA CONNECTION: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time connect to your experiences with other media in the past or at that time? If so, how? What do you see as the connection?*

> 34a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 34b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

35a. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Let's go back to how you chose this media product as meant for men. Is there anything else you can tell me about why you say this media was meant for or appropriate for men versus women?*

35b. GENDER SIMILAR: *When you first encountered this media product, how did it represent, be similar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

35b. GENDER DISSIMILAR: *How was it unrepresentative or dissimilar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

35c. GENDER REPEATEDLY: *Over the course of time that you repeatedly went back to this media product, did your ideas about how representative or unrepresentative it was change? Did it become more in agreement or more in disagreement with what you had been taught or were thinking?*

36. MAGIC WAND: *If you could have waved a magic wand and changed any aspect of your experience with this media at that point in time, what would you have changed?*

SECTION D: MEDIA FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, USED ONLY ONCE

*Look back now at your Column 3 list in your LIFE-LINE CHART in SECTION A. Circle the one specific example that stands out most in your mind, is important to you or memorable in some way. This can be a media product of any kind -- perhaps it's a movie, a TV show, a magazine, or something else. What specific media product **meant for women or girls that you've only used once** would you like to talk about?*
REMEMBER TO CIRCLE INTERVIEWEE'S CHOICE.

37. WHY DIRECTED TO WOMEN OR GIRLS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to say it was meant for women or girls?

37a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

37b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

38. WHY NOT DIRECTED TO MEN OR BOYS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to conclude that it is generally not directed to men or boys?

38a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

38b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

39. WHY SOME MEN OR BOYS ARE ATTRACTED?
Would you say any aspect of this media appeals to other men or boys? If so, what?

39a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

39b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

40. DESCRIPTION: *Think back now to the time you first encountered this media product. What was happening in your life that led you to this encounter?*

40a. ORIGINS: *Was your encounter with this media product something that just happened, you voluntarily journeyed into, or something imposed on you?*

40b. LIFE CONNECTION: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

40c. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with or connect in some way to how you saw, understood, were taught or had a sense of what is appropriate for men versus women? If so, how?*

41. ONLY ONCE: *What explains to you why you did not come back to this media?*

41a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this reason as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

41b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this reason as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

42. QUESTIONS, MUDDLES: *Did your experience with this media at that time lead you to have any questions, muddles, confusions? If so, what?*

42a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

42b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

43. EMOTIONS, FEELINGS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any emotions, feelings? If so, what?*

43a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

43b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

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44. IDEAS, CONCLUSIONS, THOUGHTS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any ideas, conclusions, thoughts? If so, what?*

> 44a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 44b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

45. SPECIAL LEARNINGS: *Did you learn anything from your experience with this media at that point in time? If so, what?*

> 45a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 45b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to how you had a sense of what or were taught is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

46. HELP, FACILITATING: *Did your experience with this media help or facilitate you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this help?*

> 46a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these helps as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 46b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these helps as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

47. HURTS, HINDERS: *Did your experience with this media hurt or hinder you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this hurt?*

> 47a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 47b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

48. SENSE OF SELF: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time relate in any way to how you thought about yourself and your sense of self? If so, how?*

> 48a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this sense of self connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

48b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this sense of self as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

49. POWER: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to conclude, question, or wonder about power and how it operates in society, your family, or the world around you? If so, how?*

49a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this view on power connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

49b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this view on power as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

50. MEDIA CONNECTION: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time connect to your experiences with other media in the past or at that time? If so, how? What do you see as the connection?*

50a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

50b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

51a. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Let's go back to how you chose this media product as meant for women. Is there anything else you can tell me about why you say this media was meant for or appropriate for women versus men?*

51b. GENDER SIMILAR: *When you first encountered this media product, how did it represent, be similar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

51b. GENDER DISSIMILAR: *How was it unrepresentative or dissimilar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

52. MAGIC WAND: *If you could have waved a magic wand and changed any aspect of your experience with this media at that point in time, what would you have changed?*

SECTION E: MEDIA FOR WOMEN, USED MULTIPLE TIMES

*Look back now at your Column 4 list in your LIFE-LINE CHART in SECTION A. Circle the one specific example that stands out most in your mind, is important to you or memorable in some way. This can be a media product of any kind -- perhaps it's a movie, a TV show, a magazine, or something else. What specific media product **meant***

for women or girls that you've used multiple times *would you like to talk about?*
REMEMBER TO CIRCLE INTERVIEWEE'S CHOICE.

53. WHY TARGETED FOR WOMEN OR GIRLS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to say it was meant for women or girls?

> 53a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

> 53b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

54. WHY NOT TARGETED FOR MEN OR BOYS?
What is it about this media product that leads you to conclude that it is generally not directed to men or boys?

> 54a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

> 54b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to what led you to list the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

55. WHY SOME MEN OR BOYS ARE ATTRACTED?
Would you say any aspect of this media appeals to other men or boys? If so, what?

> 55a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being similar to the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

> 55b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: *Do you see this explanation as being dissimilar to the other media products in this column? If so, how?*

56. DESCRIPTION: *Think back now to the time you first encountered this media product. What was happening in your life that led you to this encounter?*

> 56a. ORIGINS: *Was your encounter with this media product something that just happened, you voluntarily journeyed into, or something imposed on you?*

> 56b. LIFE CONNECTION: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

> 56c. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Did anything about this media, either the content or the form of it, resonate with or connect in some way to how you saw, understood, were taught, or had a sense of what is appropriate for men versus women? If so, how?*

57. REPEATEDLY: *What explains to you why you repeatedly used this media?*

57a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this reason as connecting to your life? If so, how?*

57b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this reason as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women? If so, how?*

57c. CONNECTION CHANGE: *Did any aspect of this media product, either the content or the form, change in how it connected or resonated with your life as you continued to use it? If so, how?*

58. QUESTIONS, MUDDLES: *Did your experience with this media at that time lead you to have any questions, muddles, confusions? If so, what?*

58a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

58b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these questions, muddles as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

59. EMOTIONS, FEELINGS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any emotions, feelings? If so, what?*

59a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

59b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these emotions, feelings as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

60. IDEAS, CONCLUSIONS, THOUGHTS: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to have any ideas, conclusions, thoughts? If so, what?*

60a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

60b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these ideas, thoughts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

61. SPECIAL LEARNINGS: *Did you learn anything from your experience with this media at that point in time? If so, what?*

61a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

61b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these learnings as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

62. HELP, FACILITATING: *Did your experience with this media help or facilitate you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this help?*

62a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these helps as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

62. SENSE OF GENDERING: *How do you see these helps as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time?*

63. HURTS, HINDERS: *Did your experience with this media hurt or hinder you at that point in time? If so, how? How did this hinder?*

63a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

63b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see these hurts as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

64. SENSE OF SELF: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time relate in any way to how you thought about yourself and your sense of self? If so, how?*

64a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this sense of self connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

64b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this sense of self as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

65. POWER: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time lead you to conclude, question, or wonder about power and how it operates in society, your family, or the world around you? If so, how?*

65a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this view on power connecting to your life at that time? If so, how?*

65b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this view on power as connecting to how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

66. MEDIA CONNECTION: *Did your experience with this media at that point in time connect to your experiences with other media in the past or at that time? If so, how? What do you see as the connection?*

66a. LIFE CONNECTION: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with, have meaning for, or in some way connect to your life at that time? If so, how?*

66b. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Do you see this connection with other media resonating with how you had a sense of or were taught what is appropriate for men versus women at that time? If so, how?*

67a. SENSE OF GENDERING: *Let's go back to how you chose this media product as meant for women. Is there anything else you can tell me about why you say this media was meant for or appropriate for women versus men?*

67b. GENDER SIMILAR: *When you first encountered this media product, how did it represent, be similar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

67b. GENDER DISSIMILAR: *How was it unrepresentative or dissimilar to what you had been taught or were thinking about gender?*

67c. GENDER REPEATEDLY: *Over the course of time that you repeatedly went back to this media product, did your ideas about how representative or unrepresentative it was change? Did it become more in agreement or more in disagreement with what you had been taught or were thinking?*

68. MAGIC WAND: *If you could have waved a magic wand and changed any aspect of your experience with this media at that point in time, what would you have changed?*

LOCATING THE INFORMANT IN TIME-SPACE
69. YEARS EDUCATION: *How many years of education do you have?*
70. ETHNIC HERITAGE: *How do you describe your ethnic heritage?*
71. YEAR BORN: *In what year were you born?*
72. GENDER: *Are you male or female?*
73. MARITAL STATUS: *Are you engaged, married, divorced, separated, or single?*
74. KIND OF JOB: *What kind of job do you currently have? What kind of place do you work at?* (e.g. secretary for a small printing plant; sales manager for large publishing house)
75. GREW UP: *What kind of place did you grow up in? Rural, suburban, small urban, large urban, etc?*
76. KIND OF JOB(S) FATHER/MALE CARETAKER HAD WHILE GROWING UP: *What kind of jobs did your father, male caretaker have? Working at what kind of places?*
77. KIND OF JOB(S) MOTHER/FEMALE CARETAKER HAD WHILE GROWING UP: *What kind of jobs did your mother, female caretaker have? Working at what kind of places?*

APPENDIX B:

CODING SCHEMES

GENDERED MEDIA ENGAGING SITUATION (GMES)

Four types of media engagings structured the interview -- aka four situations of media engagings in which questions were asked to elicit the media consumer's interpretive stance on that engaging.

1. Meant for Men Used Once
   a. Interpretively construed as that media experienced but did not desire further engagings.
   b. CODE AS GMES = 1
2. Meant for Men Used Repeatedly
   a. Interpretively construed as that media considered self a fan of for some period of time.
   b. Fanshipping from basic level of repeated engagement to ultimate level of fan production.
   c. CODE AS GMES = 2
3. Meant for Women Used Once
   a. Interpretively construed as that media experienced but did not desire further engagings.
   b. CODE AS GMES = 3
4. Meant for Women Used Repeatedly
   a. Interpretively construed as that media considered self a fan of for some period of time.
   b. Fanshipping from basic level of repeated engagement to ultimate level of fan production.
   c. CODE AS GMES = 4

SECTION A TABLES

Coding procedure, based on grounded theory.

1. All tables collected in Round 1 of data collection -- Winter 08 Quarter, 42 participants -- were copy-and-pasted into on master table.

   a. Any tables gathered in Round 2 of data collection -- Spring 08 Quarter -- will be used to further test the validity and reliability of these generated codes.

2. Once all tables were combined, all same-name media products were grouped together.

   a. "Same-name" implies that the same words were used to label the media product.

   b. The point of categorizing by "same-name" is to stay as true as possible to the labeling of the participants. Hence some media products that might otherwise be collapsed together, such as romantic movies and chick flicks, remained separate to preserve the distinctions made by the participants.

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3. Next, to further reduce categories, media products were grouped by their defining genre characteristic.

   a. This occurred primarily for those items if they were not "same-name" but were similar in the type of media product they represented.

   b. Media products I was not familiar with were researched on www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to verify what genre defined it, as given by those two websites.

   c. If a media product could be defined with multiple genres, such as romantic comedy, then the genre commonly placed first in the definitional label was used for categorization. Hence romantic comedy would be placed with romances, not comedies.

4. Same-name groupings were also checked for their defining genre characteristics, using the rules outlined in Step 3.

5. These smaller genre categorizations of media products were then collected into their overarching genre characteristic, which became the main categories for the collapsible coding scheme.

   a. Typically each main category is a specific genre; however, three categories are specific types of media technology that were given their own category because of the different way the media engaging occurs with that technology, regardless of the genre of the content.

   b. In the remaining category, subcategories consist of either specific texts or general occurrences of the genre crystallized in a specific media technology.

CODING SCHEME -- SEC-A TABLES

MAIN CATEGORY	CODE#
SPORTS	000
COMEDY	010
HORROR	020
ACTION/ADVENTURE	030
ROMANCE	040
SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY	050
DRAMA	060
MUSICAL	070
HISTORICAL	080
CHILDREN'S	090
REALITY	100
GUIDANCE	110
SEX	120
ADVERTISEMENTS	130
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	140
GAMES*	150
MUSIC*	160
PERSONAL COMPUTERS*	170

RULES FOR CODING WITH MINOR CATEGORIES

1. All coding occurs in minor categories -- major categories are just for organization and comparison purposes.

2. If Pp names a media product I do not have personal experience with, then the following websites consulted to determine the genre nature of the product: www.amazon.com; www.imdb.com; www.wikipedia.org.

3. If Pp names a media product with a minor category name -- i.e. a genre + medium -- is treated as "1 unique mention" and will be coded by the same-name matching used to generate that category.

4. If Pp lists specific titles of media products, count each title as "1 unique mention", and it will be assumed the Pp engaged with this specific entity at least once to have named it.

5. If Pp lists a minor category name AND a series of specific titles, treat each title as "1 unique mention".

6. If Pp lists a minor category name AND specific title, AND the pairing does not reflect the definitions used to construct this coding scheme, then code based on the interpretive stance of the individual. For Example -- Scary Movies like Terminator & Action Movies like Star Wars -- The first would be 021 and the second would be 031.

SPORTS 000-009			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Football	001	Any mention of American football, amateur or professional.	College/NCAA football NFL football
Basketball	002	Any mention of basketball, amateur or professional.	Women's basketball NBA games College/NCAA basketball
Baseball	003	Any mention of baseball, amateur or professional.	Professional baseball MLB baseball
Wrestling	004	Any mention of wrestling, amateur or professional.	Professional wrestling WWF wrestling Pro wrestling TV shows
Golf	005	Any mention of goal, amateur or professional	Golf broadcasts
Various Sports	006	General mention of "sports" Any live action sport not mentioned in 001-005	hunting, strength competitions, motorsports, Olympic competitions
Magazines	007	Any magazine that can be identified as discussing sports.	Sports Illustrated / Sports Illustrated for Women Velo Magazines ESPN Magazine Trading cards
TV Shows	008	Any television show that can be identified as discussing sports.	ESPN / ESPN2 / ESPNU Big Ten Network Fox Sports Network Sportscenter Best Damn Sports Show Period
Movies	009	Any movie that focuses on a sport.	Hoosiers Friday Night Lights Remember the Titans Glory Road Miracle Coach Carter

COMEDY	010-019		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Children's Movies (Rated G-PG)	011	USE www.imdb.com and www.filmratings.com to determine film ratings	Home Alone (1-3) Three Stooges The Sand Lot Teen Wolf Space Jam
Teen Movies (PG-13 Rated)	012	USE www.imdb.com and www.filmratings.com to determine film ratings	Liar Liar Austin Powers Anchorman My Father the Hero
Adult Movies (R Rated)	013	USE www.imdb.com and www.filmratings.com to determine film ratings	Stripes American Pie The 40 Year Old Virgin
Family Sitcoms	014	Sitcoms that can be watched by the entire family.	Boy Meets World Saved By the Bell Full House Secret World of Alex Mack Clarissa Explains It All According to Jim Sabrina the Teenage With
Adult Sitcoms	015	Sitcoms geared toward adults.	The Office That 70's Show Girlfriends Friends Golden Girls Will & Grace
Books	016	Text or graphics funny novels.	Archie comic books Knights of the Dinner Table comic
Cartoons	017	Primetime animated series.	The Simpson's Slapstick cartoons Ren & Stimpy Beavis & Butthead Family Guy King of the Hill South Park
Stand-up	018	Live or telecast.	Will Ferrell Larry the Cable Guy

HORROR	020-029		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Movies	021	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Scream I Know What You Did Last Summer Halloween Friday the 13th Robocop Nightmare on Elm Street
Television	022	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Are You Afraid of the Dark?
Novels	023	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Goosebumps

ACTION/ADVENTURE	030-039		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
General Movies	031	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Batman movie Speed The Patriot The Rock James Bond Fight Club Smokey and the Bandit The Last Samurai
Mobster Movies	032	Movies dealing with American gangsters.	Pulp Fiction Goodfellas The Godfather Trilogy Scarface Carlito's Way
TV	033	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	24 Baywatch Lost Smallville Power Rangers Walker Texas Ranger The Fall Guy
Game Shows	034	Shows that require physical tasks.	Guts Legends of the Hidden Temple
Cartoons	035	Superhero or other action based cartoons.	He-Man Thundercats GI Joe Power Puff Girls Batman The Justice League Spiderman Superman Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Conan
Anime	036	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Transformers Dragonball Z Pokémon Yu-Gi-Oh Sailor Moon
Novels	037	Action, suspense, thriller.	Tom Clancy Novels
Comic Books	038	Manga Graphic Novels	Darkhawk Superman

ROMANCE	040-049		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Chick Flicks	041	Any mention that actually uses the label "chick flicks" --count specific titles when linked to this label, even if counted elsewhere when not labeled as such	"Girly" films
Movies	042	Any mention of romance movies, or love movies, without the label "chick flicks"	Ever After Romeo & Juliet Japanese romance anime Jane Austen movies Bride & Prejudice Sense and Sensibility The Notebook
Comedies	043	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Princess Bride Legally Blonde How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days 10 Things I Hate About You 27 Dresses Princess Diary Pretty Women The Prince and Me Clueless
Novels	044	Text or graphics romantic novels.	Romeo & Juliet Japanese graphic romantic novel Jane Austen novels Yaoi manga Girls' comics

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY 050-059			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Star Wars	051	Any mention of Star Wars.	Star Wars movies Star Wars novels, pre-New Hope
Lord of the Rings	052	Any mention of Lord of the Rings.	Lord of the Rings movie Read the Lord of the Rings trilogy
Movies	053	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Jurassic Park Labyrinth Dune 5th Element The Matrix E.T. movie Star Trek Harry Potter Alien Godzilla
Books	054	Text or graphics science fiction or fantasy novels.	Men's comic JoJo's Adventure You're the Hero books Osamu Tezuka comic Star Trek novels Anne Rice & Piers Anthony (fantasy) Harry Potter Nicholas Sparks books
TV	055	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Star Trek: The Next Generation Captain Vyom Stargate SG1 premieres BBC scifi shows Doctor Who Lost in Space
Magazines	056	Any magazine identified as dealing with science fiction or fantasy.	
General	057	Any general mention of science fiction or fantasy.	

DRAMA	060-069			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS		EXAMPLES
Daytime	061	Any hour-long drama or dramatic series that aired initially during TV dayparts --primarily, soap operas or melodramas		Days of Our Lives As the World Turns The Bold and the Beautiful Guiding Light
Primetime	062	Any hour-long drama or dramatic series that aired initially primetime on TV		The Pretender ER Grey's Anatomy
Mystery	063	Regardless of medium, crime, murder mystery, whodunit, and similar story.		Adventure/mystery novels Agatha Christie Sherlock Holms Arsene Lupin novels Japanese detective graphic novel CSI Law and Order Hardy Boys books Nancy Drew books The Inside Man
Relationship	064	Regardless of medium, family, friendship, romantic, sexual, and similar story.		Sex in the City Desperate Housewives Gilmore Girls The O.C. Lipstick Jungle 7th Heaven Dawson's Creek Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants Mean Girls
Cable Networks	066	Any cable network not identified as having any other genre.		Lifetime Bravo! Oxygen Channel Lifetime Movie Network
Literature, General	065	Any mention of books without specific genre or titles		African American Literature Literary magazines

MUSICAL	070-079			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS		EXAMPLES
Movies	071	IF specific title has been in both theatre & movies, assume most likely engaging is with movie. IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.		Annie Wizard of Oz Singing in the Rain Grease Rent Sound of Music High School Musical
Theatre	072	Assume theatre if never a movie or if uses theatre specific label, such as ballet, symphony, etc. All		Nutcracker ballet Japanese mega-musicals
General	073	Basic mention without specific titles that can go above		

HISTORICAL	080-089		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Novels	081	Text or graphics historical novels.	Little House on the Prairie books American Girl books Bronte novels
Movies	082	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Old cowboy movies -- John Wayne War movies
TV	083	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	War shows on History Channel

CHILDREN'S	090-099		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Cartoons, General	091	Cartoons where gender is not easily identifiable.	My Little Pony Maple Town Hello Kitty Care Bears
Cartoons, Female Lead	092	Cartoons where a female is clearly the main character.	Jem and the Holograms Barbie movies Rainbow Brite Strawberry Shortcake
Cartoons, Male Lead	093	Cartoons where a male is clearly or substantially when the main character.	Disney films with male main character The Smurfs Tiny Toons
Disney, General	094	Either general mention of Disney products, or titles that not related to Disney's princess line	Fox and the Hound book Disney movies Disney cartoons Mickey-Minnie Mouse Walt Disney's Disney Hour
Disney, Princess	095	Any mention of "Disney princess movies", or specific titles starring princesses	Beauty and the Beast Cinderella Snow White
Books, General	096	Any other text or graphic book directed to children.	Boy Scouting book Newspaper cartoon, Cathy Books on tape
Young Adult Books	097	Any books, not genre specific, intended for children, teenagers, young adults	Judy Blum books Babysitters' Club Valley Girls Gossip Girl, the novel
Live Action	098	Any live action show meant for preschool or elementary school children.	Barney Reading Rainbow Lamb Chop's Play Along Little House on the Prairie Classic children movies Babysitters' Club movies

REALITY	100-109		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
TV, General	101	Stating only "reality shows". Any reality show that does not fit into the categories below.	The Real World City Confidential Orange County Choppers The First 48 Girls Next Door Bridezillas Dirty Jobs
Talk Shows	102	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Tyra Banks Oprah Dr. Phil People's Court Ellen Jerry Springer Show The View
Fashion Shows	103	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	America's Next Top Model Project Runway Fashion File makeover shows Ten Years Younger What Not to Wear
Competition Shows	104	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	Amazing Race American Gladiators The Apprentice Fear Factor The Bachelor The Bachelorette
News	105	IF unknown, USE www.imdb.com and www.amazon.com to determine genre.	New York Times Wall Street Journal 20/20 Dateline CNN Business news
Entertainment News	106	Shows focusing on or showcasing Hollywood, celebrity, entertainment news	The Today Show E! News
Tabloids	107	Gossip magazines, news	People magazine US Weekly

GUIDANCE 110-119			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINTIONS	EXAMPLES
Home Improvement	111	From construction to beautification of homes -- may require further analysis by separation into construction and beautification.	Woodworking shows Hardware shows Construction TV shows Martha Stewart Home & Garden Southern Living Real Simple Decoration TV shows This Old House 'Homemaker" shows HGTV
Cooking	112	Regardless of medium, the focus in on cooking.	Rachel Ray Cooking shows Food Network shows Cook books Comic called "Oishinbo" Frugal Gourmet Joy of Cooking
Health	113	Regardless of medium the focus is on being healthy.	Fitness Network Men's Health magazine Body building magazine
General Magazines	114	References simply "men's magazines" or "women's magazines" without further specification, or any other magazine mentioned.	Oprah magazine Venus Zine Wine Spectator magazine
Fashion Magazines	115	Magazines where description contains first or primary focus on fashion and style, and the primary/intended audience is adult.	GQ Magazine Marie Claire Cosmetic magazines Elle Essence Cosmopolitan Vogue Glamour
Teen Magazines	116	Any magazine directed toward preteens or adolescents.	Seventeen Bop Teen Cosmo American Girl magazine Boy's Life magazine
Religious	117	Mentions of religious and/or spiritual content	Billy Graham Wild at Heart Every Man's Battle magazine

SEX	120-129			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS		EXAMPLES
Pornography	121	Regardless of medium, except magazine, any mention of basic pornography.		Porn movies Soft core Porn website
Playboy	122	Playboy or other pornographic magazine.		Exotic naughty magazines
Maxim	123	Maxim or similar magazine.		Maxim
Sports Illustrated Swimsuit	124	Only the swimsuit edition of Sports Illustrated – must be a separate mention.		Sports Illustrated -- Swimsuit
Sexy Ads	125	Any advertisement where sex is overtly being used to sell the product.		Axe body spray Ads for phone sex lines Girls Gone Wild Victoria's Secret
Erotic Novels	126	Text or graphics sexual novels.		Zane books

ADVERTISEMENTS	130-139			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS		EXAMPLES
Shopping	131	Or are no license		QVC Forever 21 website Target Wal-Mart
Hygiene	132			
Alcohol	133			Beer commercials
Automobiles	134			Ford Truck
Media	135			Billboard advertisements -- The Blitz
Cleaning	136			Swifer Mr. Clean Brawny paper towels
Accessories	137			Jewelry

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	140-149			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS		EXAMPLES
TV	141	General science shows		Beakman's World Bill Nye
How It Works	142	Science shows that focus on unveiling the operations of some technology or scientific process		How It's Made Modern Marvels Future Weapons Mythbusters
Magazines	143			Harvard Journal of Medicine
Automobiles	144	Anything focusing on the construction, performance, maintenance of automobiles		Racing cars magazines Top Gear Mopar magazine Demolition derby Car & Driver Motor Trend
General	145			

GAMES	150-159		
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Violent VG	151		Grand Theft Auto Halo Mortal Kombat Street Fighter Duke Nukem Goldeneye 007 First person shooters Blood and gore video games Fight video games Resident Evil
Fantasy VG	152		Final Fantasy Legend of Zelda Dragon Warrior Myst World of Warcraft
Sports VG	153		Racing video games NFL video games NBA Live video games Madden Football video games Grand Turismo
Classic VG	154		Asteroids Space Invaders Omega Race Galaga Pole Position Pong Pac-man
Live RPG	155		Magic the Gathering Dungeon & Dragons Mage: The Awakening White Dwarf magazine
Board	156		Board Games
Nintendo	157		Super Mario Duck Hunt Tetris Nintendo / 64 / GameCube / Wii Donkey Kong
Sega	158		Earth Worm Jim Sonic the Hedgehog Barbie
General VG	159		Playstation /2 /3 Video game consoles XBox Video game magazines

MUSIC	160-169			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS		EXAMPLES
Rock	161	Rock music, along with related genres		Heavy rock, metal music Black Sabbath Fear Factory Alternative/Punk music Garbage Hole
Rap	162	Rap music, along with related genres		Hip-hop gangsta rap Gangster rap Rap about hurting women
Soul	163	Soul music, along with related genres		R&B
Country	164	Country music, along with related genres		George Straight CD
Pop	165	Music not recognized as specifically one of the above 161-164 genres, includes boy bands, music divas, love ballads		Celine Dion Britney Spears Backstreet Boys N'Sync Love music Mariah Carey Whitney Houston Colbie Callait Barry Manilow Hannah Montana Spice Girls 98 Degrees New Kids on the Block
Religious	166			Christian music of different sorts Christian hip-hop
Technology	167			MP3 players CDs
Magazines	168			Juxtapoz Spin magazine
General	169	Simply mentions music without further specification		

PERSONAL COMPUTERS	170-179			
Subcategory	Code#	DEFINITIONS		EXAMPLES
Computers	171			Family computer
Internet Sites	172			Family gets internet at home Chat groups Mailing lists Ovulation internet widget/social website thefashionbomb/blogspot.net fanfiction online dating sites
Computer Reviews	173			Computer shopper www.slashdot.com Java Posse podcast

These sections to be coded using five coding schemes. Some coding schemes may be to a particular question or series of questions. The exact nature of each coding scheme and how to apply it will be outlined for each.

Codes for this section include:

- WHY GENDERED – coded pink
- WHY INITIATED, HOW VOLITIONAL,– coded orange
- WHY STOPPED/CONTINUED – coded blue
- HOW HELPED – coded yellow
- HOW SAW GENDER – coded purple

NOTE: Numbers given for coding categories are currently to be used only for ease of coding and tracking. Later use may be for quantitative coding, but such a determination will be made later.

WHY GENDERED

Looking to show presence of theorization for why some media products are interpreted as gendered – what has led to this conclusion? Looking for reasons for media products being meant for men versus meant for women, this conclusion.

From the interpretive stance of the individual, this means how the individual is looking around and seeing what is the cause of the gendering.

PROCEDURE:

This coding scheme applies to the answers given for questions:

- WHY DIRECTED TO MEN/BOYS, SIMILAR & DISSIMILAR
- WHY NOT DIRECTED TO WOMEN/GIRLS, SIMILAR & DISSIMILAR.

Code only unique mentions/reasons for why gendered within each of the four situations. Write in the corresponding code number for each unique mention in the right margin of the page.

Record for analysis only those codes pertaining to the specific media product being discussed in the situation, either directly mentioned or indirectly inferred by comparison to other items in that column.

NOTES:

Just saying that the media product is or is not directed/targeted/marketed to men or women is not enough of an answer because it is just reiterating the question.

Do not code mentions that are only names of genres, as those are being captured in the coding scheme for the SecA tables.

Even if the person mentions being stereotypical or ashamed for their answer, code as if such statement was not mentioned – looking here for what comes to their mind to explain their interpretation of why gendered.

CODE	Category	Rules	Exemplars
P1	Seeing Others	• BASED ON LIVED EXPERIENCES • Must be explicit saying women more than men, or men less than women • Must explicit say men more than women, or women less than men.	• Know more men who are fans of sports, really into it. • Saw that only women were reading them.
P2	Looking at Self	• BASED ON LIVED EXPERIENCES • Indicates because self does or doesn't do.	• I've always been into video games. • I've never really cared for Barbies.
P3	Hearing from Others	• BASED ON LIVED EXPERIENCES • Indicates information about who meant for comes from parents or friends. • Direct or indirect education, which includes seeing what they do, social stigma, peer pressure.	• My dad told me musicals aren't for men. • Men are afraid others will find out they like soaps. • All of my girl friends were reading Cosmo. • I never saw Mom watching football.
P4	Hearing from Society	• Indicates awareness of social norms, standards, from simply stating this general awareness (what should/supposed to do) to criticizing this structure.	• You just know that women don't like fighting. • The general rule is men aren't supposed to like fashion.
P5	Hearing from Media	• Indicates awareness of media industry's practices to control content, either just stating as fact or criticizing this control. • Either directly, such as pointing out who produced it, or indirectly, such as attached commercials.	• Someone in the media means for it to be that way. • Because of the ads during the it.
P6	Seeing Features	• Mentions different features of the text/content. • Code each unique feature mentioned: o Emotional o Violent/aggressive o Certain perspective o Prominent characters o Focus on relationships o Competition o Singing and dancing o Type of humor o Sexualized o Certain topics o Type of drama	• There was a lot of violent, war and military. • The main characters were all women. • The song has a man's perspective.
P7	Knowing Men, Women	• General discussion, recitation of gender differences with no mention of such conclusion coming from LIVED EXPERIENCES. • Men are this way, women are that way – recitation of societal norms with clear mention of society as cause of the conclusions. • Includes any supposition about make-up of audience without actually seeing the audience.	• Most of the people who watch football are men. • Women are just more emotional on average.

PROCEDURE:

This coding scheme applies to the answers given for questions:

- DESCRIPTION
- ORIGINS

This coding scheme consists of two parts:

- DESCRIPTION: Answers to who/what led them to the encounter with the media product.
- ORIGINS: Answers to how see the engaging as imposed upon them.

NOTE: These two schemes will most likely be reported as one in how the codes overlap.

WHY INITIATE
Code each unique mention after coding the ORIGINS so as not to conflate ORIGINS with DESCRIPTIONS.
- Can only be D3 **or** D6 **or** D7 – someone brought me to it, was surrounding me, I decided to join in.
- Do not code in ORIGIN unless not enough information in DESCRIPTION.

CODE	Category	Rules	Exemplars
D1	Satisfied	• Heard, then intrigued, interested.	• I wanted to know what the big deal was with the show.
D2	Sought Out	• Needing product, information, novelty.	• I started being interested in dating, but didn't know what to do.
D3	Brought to It	• Someone introduced it to self.	• My father watched it all the time.
D4	Filled Time	• Having nothing else to do.	• I was just channel surfing.
D5	Assigned to Do	• Having to do as a task.	• It was part of a class project.
D6	Surrounded by It	• Going on around self.	• Everyone in class was watching it.
D7	Went with Another	• Spend time with someone who already does it.	• He and his friends were playing, and I wanted to be a part of that.
D8	Stumbled into It	• Indicates meandering into it.	• I was flipping channels.

HOW VOLITIONAL

CODE	Category	Rules
O1	Imposed	Indicates encounter someone or something's choice other than individual's.
O2	Voluntarily	Indicates encounter was personal choice.
O3	Just Happened	Indicates encounter was not planned by anyone.
O4	Imposed & Voluntarily	
O5	Imposed & Just Happened	
O6	Voluntarily & Just Happened	
O7	All Three	Imposed, Voluntarily, and Just Happened

WHY STOPPED/CONTINUED

This coding scheme is structured much like a binary system, where the main reason is the same for both possibilities, only for STOPPED it was lacking and for CONTINUED it was enough.

NOTE: In write-up must be made clear that when occurs in SecB/D means WHY STOPPED, and when occurs in SecC/E means WHY CONTINUED.

PROCEDURE:

This coding scheme applies to the answers given for questions:

- ONLY ONCE – the reason given indicates inadequacy in providing what needs to continue engaging
- REPEATEDLY – the reason given indicates adequately providing what was/is needed to continue engaging

Write in the corresponding code number for each unique mention in the right margin of the page.

NOTE: Do not code Helps, only Whys.

CODE	Category	DID NOT (Stopped) / DID (Continued)	Exemplars
B1	Relating to Life	*Relating* to how saw reality, what was happening in own life	What she was going through was nothing like what I was going through.
B2	Relating to Self	*Relating* to how thought, felt, dreamt, needed, preferred	The way he felt about the game was the same as how I felt.
B3	Preferring the Content	*Caring* for some aspect of the content, critiquing or preferring content	I really don't like stories about women acting that way.
B4	Sensing Appropriate	*Feeling* engaging was appropriate, felt passionate, no restrictions	My dad was saying I shouldn't play with such girlie games.
B5	Reacting Well	*Having* positive reaction or memory, emotionally or mentally	The whole experience just left me with a bad memory.
B6	Deciding to Spend Time	*Feeling* engaging was a good use of time, need to continue, good escapism	I love serials, I have to know what happens next!
B7	Being Able	*Having* the time, resources, understanding to engage with more	I never had the time to go back and play it again.
B8	Being with Others	*Having* other person(s) to share engaging	I would watch it to spend time with my girlfriend.

HOW HELPED

This is the only scheme not created through grounded coding. Instead it is an application of Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology Helps scheme, as modified and applied in the IMLS-OCSC-OSU project.
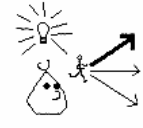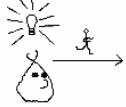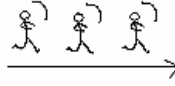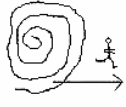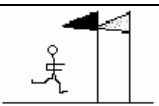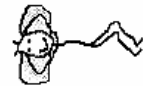
> NOTE: Helps are how the person saw the media product impacting his/her life. This is not coding how anything else in that situation may have helped the individual. These are how the media helped life.

PROCEDURE:

Helps can be found anywhere. However, coding begins in HELP, FACILITIATING and SPECIAL LEARNINGs, but do not code Y7 as general inspiration and Y1 as general learning from SPECIAL LEARNINGs. If none there, move to other locations.

- MUST BE CLEAR that it was seen as a help when looking back at the situation.
- Only unique helps will be coded, regardless of where it occurs within the situation.

Write in the corresponding code number for each unique mention in the right margin of the page.

CODE	DERVIN pictures	Category	Explanation	Exemplar
Y1		Got Pictures, Ideas	Information, insight, advice obtained from media without indication of acting on it.	The magazine gave me make-up tips.
Y2		Got Directions	Obtained sense of possible directions to take, benefits/costs of directions, to make decision direction to go, raising possibilities/questions of what is available.	Watching the show gave me an idea of what I wanted to do with my life.
Y3		Got Hows, Methods	Obtained ideas of how to move on selected path, whatever can be used to construct the path, moving	I was able to see what gaming techniques I wanted to develop.
Y4		Got Support	Obtained/interpreted closeness, stronger relationship, intimacy, support, understanding, listening, assistance by someone else on the path	Knowing that Jon Stewart felt that way too reinforced that it was okay for me to say those things.
Y5		Got Human Togetherness	Obtained/interpreted sense of being with others in similar situation/role, common ground, connection/bond, sense of not being only one going through it	Seeing Carrie Bradshaw go through the same things I went through made me feel better about my situation.
Y6		Got Centered	Obtained sense of inner/self control, a refuge from what surrounded with, happy with self, sense of well-being	I could always calm down when Oprah came on.
Y7		Got Started, Motivated	Obtained motivation, confidence, inspiration to move down a path that was stalled on	Watching football with my dad gave me that push to get into sports myself.
Y8		Kept Going, Made Progress	Obtained/interpreted assistance to stay on the path, to continue forward, to make progress	Seeing what the director did just reaffirmed to me my passion for making movies.
Y9		Journeying Got Easier	Obtained/interpreted something that made the movement easier, quicker, more convenient, timelier	Because I had my books to read, it made not having a man less painful.
Y10		Got Control	Obtained ability to control or avoid some bad situation/outcome, from material to mental, world making sense	Reading Cosmo, it was like I suddenly understood what all the girls around me were doing – I was no longer confused!
Y11		Reached Goals	Obtained/interpreted closure, reaching end of journey, arrived at destination	When I finished that game, it was like a chapter of my life was finally over.
Y12		Got Rest, Relaxation, Escape	Obtained a diversion, a detour from the path, to rest, escape	Considering the stress of school, watching the show was my daily escape.
Y13		Got, Felt Pleasure	Obtained pleasure, happiness, joy, whether moving or not	Whenever I get to sing-a-long with Ariel, I just feel good, no matter what's happening in my life.

<u>HOW SAW GENDER</u>

General theorizing of gender, the "appropriate" relationship between the concepts of men and women.

This coding scheme examples basic way gender is seen in the situation, moving back and forth between being about men and being about women to not being about gender at all. Hence the application of the see-saw image.
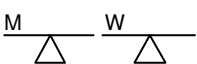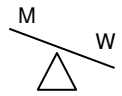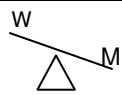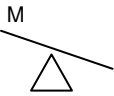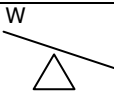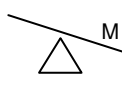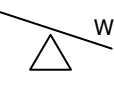
PROCEDURE:
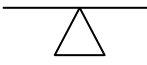
How gender is seen can be found in any of the answers to SENSE OF GENDERING from DESCRIPTION to MEDIA CONNECTION.

ALL CODES will be counted, regardless of where it occurs within the situation, but only 1 unique mention per SENSE OF GENDERING space. This is to allow for proportional comparison of amount of each code in each situation, which could show contradictions.

Write in the corresponding code number for each unique mention in the right margin of the page.

NOTE:

- Only code how gender was seen "then" and not "now looking back" views.
- Must be talking about generalities and not specifics about what experienced in life or what interpreted from media product (the latter of which would be gathered in WHY GENDERED).
- Appropriate also cued by should, supposed to, ought to, and other words used to express feeling of obligation to others/society – Inappropriate cued by opposite words.

CODE	REINHARD pictures	Category	Rules	Exemplar
G1	M W (balanced on fulcrum)	Balanced	Indicates answer applies to both, equally, either. Implies one is not necessarily better than the other, must/can also do	Both men and women need to find love.
G2	M W (two separate fulcrums)	Too Different to Balance	Genders just different. Indicates difference in what either gender does/prefers, with no mention of more or less or what is appropriate.	Men just like violence, while women prefer huggy-feely stories.
G3	M tilted down, W up	Imbalance to Men	Indicates men have something more than women, OR women have something less than men	Men are more able than women to speak their mind in public.
G4	W tilted down, M up	Imbalance to Women	Indicates women have something more than men, OR men have something less than women	Women have fewer restrictions than men to show emotion in public.
G5	(balanced, no labels)	Nothing to Balance	Gender does not apply. Indicates gender does not matter with answer given, something else separates people, such as age or personal preferences	In matters of being with family, being man or woman doesn't matter.
G6	M tilted up	Men Held Up	Only mentions characteristic(s) of men considered to be *appropriate* for men, even if not say appropriate.	Men are supposed to be violent.
G7	W tilted up	Women Held Up	Only mentions characteristic(s) of women considered to be *appropriate* for women, even if not say appropriate.	Women are allowed to be emotional.
G8	M tilted down	Men Pressed Down	Only mentions characteristic(s) of men considered to be *inappropriate* for men without comparing to the other.	Reading romance is not something men should be doing.
G9	W tilted down	Women Pressed Down	Only mentions characteristic(s) of women considered to be *inappropriate* for women without comparing to the other.	Women are not supposed to like violence.

APPENDIX C

CODING EXAMPLE

340   SECTION E: MEDIA FOR WOMEN, USED MULTIPLE TIMES

341   53. WHY TARGETED FOR WOMEN OR GIRLS: The lifestyles of females in New York City are   p6
342   the main subject.

343   53a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: Similar, yes. All the media outlets and shows listed
344   contain aspects that appeal to females more than males. I've always seen
345   swimming as a female sport on television, although males do participate;
346   photography seems more of an intimate appeal of the eye that can be captured by
347   females; hopeless romantic films involve love stories that females crave; cheaters is
348   dramatic and the sex talk show may appeal more to females as a guilty pleasure. i   p2
349   don't see myself sitting down with a bunch of dudes watching or participating in any
350   of these activities or watching any of these shows together   p1

351   53b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS:

352   54. WHY NOT TARGETED FOR MEN OR BOYS: It incorporates problems that females have
353   and males are less likely to relate to say pregnancy or meeting the man of your dreams

354   54a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: it is similar because the other topics I listed generally
355   focus on issues that females face, and some may even discriminate against males

356   54b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS:

357   55. WHY SOME MEN OR BOYS ARE ATTRACTED: Others may learn a few things about the
358   female nature and their choices of dating particular men

359   55a. SIMILAR TO OTHERS: More so because it can be used as an educational tool
360   alongside unrelentless humor

361   55b. DISSIMILAR TO OTHERS: Swimming just for watching, Photography for skill
362   development or hobby, hopeless romantic films to watch on a date with another girl,
363   cheaters to learn what not to do, will and grace as a way to accept the gay male-female
364   relationship and sex talk as a tool of education and developing experience

365   56. DESCRIPTION: I was sitting in the living room with my mom after we ordered a pizza.   D3

366   56a. ORIGINS: it just happened, she always watches the show and I figured why   O3
367   not

368   56b. LIFE CONNECTION: Carrie Bradshaw is a journalist, I thought that was
369   interesting, but saw her column as something that I would not be interested in she's
370   more of a columnist I guess

371   56c. SENSE OF GENDERING: The glam lifestyle of females having shoes and
372   meeting random guys put me in their shoes   B5

373   57. REPEATEDLY: I found humor in it and it reminded me of eating pizza with my mom, I   B8
374   became and addict to the show

375   57a. LIFE CONNECTION: I was single and many of them were on the show, always
376   in search of the right one

377   57b. SENSE OF GENDERING: Hey, both men and women can be single waiting for   G1
378   the right person to come along

379   57c. CONNECTION CHANGE: there is hope, there wasn't a show like this for guys

380   58. QUESTIONS, MUDDLES: I wondered why they picked New York City, but as the shows
381   progressed the metaphor of being single in a city full of people is justifiable

382   58a. LIFE CONNECTION: Yea at that time I was depressed and lonely

383   58b. SENSE OF GENDERING: Both genders experience loneliness   G1

384   59. EMOTIONS, FEELINGS: Gave me a sense of hope and realized that the possibility of
385   meeting someone was there

386   59a. LIFE CONNECTION: Yea, at that time I felt nobody understood me or could
387   relate to me

388   59b. SENSE OF GENDERING: Both genders can be misunderstood   G1

389   60. IDEAS, CONCLUSIONS, THOUGHTS: I saw it as a guilty pleasure and never admitted to
390   waching it with my male friends. But my female friends loved the fact that I watched it, we
391   talked about different episodes

392   60a. LIFE CONNECTION: I felt insecure

393   60b. SENSE OF GENDERING: both genders may appeal to their insecurities by   G1
394   turning to media that is aimed at the opposite gender

395 61. SPECIAL LEARNINGS: I learned that females do a lot of the same things that guys do,
396 just with different conversations, less sensationalized

397   61a. LIFE CONNECTION: I was able to connect to females more because I could
398   discuss my feelings, with guys you can't do that so much

399   61b. SENSE OF GENDERING: Females share stronger bonds with each other more G4
400   so than two males because females are able to get more personal and intimate in
401   conversation

402 62. HELP, FACILITATING: It helped me connect to females more Y5

403   62a. LIFE CONNECTION: Yes, I formed close relationships with a couple females.
404   It gave me confidence and sense of well-being

405   62. SENSE OF GENDERING: I was able to find ways to get my male friends to open
406   up more and develop bonds with them

407 63. HURTS, HINDERS: I wouldn't say so

408 64. SENSE OF SELF: It boosted my confidence because I could talk about the show with my
409 female friends which lead to a series of conversations on our own relationship expeireinces

410   64a. LIFE CONNECTION: I was previously feeling down about everything, this
411   opened me up

412   64b. SENSE OF GENDERING: Conversation is important sometimes to work through
413   problems

414 65. POWER: The show made me see women as more powerful in society than portrayed in
415 other media shows that depict women as weak and powerless

416   65a. LIFE CONNECTION: I saw myself as powerful, until I talked to some girls and
417   they seemed to hold the most power in on conversation

418   65b. SENSE OF GENDERING: Females and males can both be powerful sources in G1
419   conversation

420 66. MEDIA CONNECTION: other media shows focus on the male perspective and allow little
421 room for female interaction, this show focused only on females and their daily lives

422   66a. LIFE CONNECTION: not in particular

423   66b. SENSE OF GENDERING: men hold the dominant force in the majority of G3
424   shows, but times have changed

425 67a. SENSE OF GENDERING:

426   67b. GENDER SIMILAR: One character, Samantha, was portrayed as a female who
427   got around a lot. I've been taught that her actions are typical of most females. In
428   reality this is not the case, but her character fulfilled that thought.

429   67b. GENDER DISSIMILAR: Each character was distinct and represented particular
430   female traits in a humorous light, none in particular was dissimilar to my thoughts

431   67c. GENDER REPEATEDLY: It was in agreement with the thought of girls going
432   out and eating together during lunch, but the show never focused on their careers
433   per say, but more focus was placed on their relationships and male interactions.

434 68. MAGIC WAND: I would have never watched it from the start. I wouldn't have
435 programmed my Sunday nights around a show

436

437 LOCATING THE INFORMANT IN TIME-SPACE

438 69. YEARS EDUCATION: 16 years

439 70. ETHNIC HERITAGE: Caucasian

440 71. YEAR BORN: 1981

441 72. GENDER: male

442 73. MARITAL STATUS: single

443 74. KIND OF JOB: student, restaurant general manager, indie magazine editor-in-chief

444 75. GREW UP: small urban

445 76. KIND OF JOB(S) FATHER/MALE CARETAKER HAD WHILE GROWING UP: small business
446 owner