The Influence of Out-Group Network Ties on the Television Usage and Attitudes of Mormon Women

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The Influence of Out-group Network Ties on the
Television Usage and Attitudes of Mormon Women

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Communications
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Lois D. Brown
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This thesis by Lois D. Brown is accepted in its present form by the
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the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Chapter One

The Problem

I. Introduction

The theory that there exists one large “mass” television audience has long lost credibility with communication researchers. As Dennis McQuail (1983) writes, “The verbal accident which has equated mass with the audience for mass media should not mislead us to favour this conception” (p. 152).

Rather than a mass audience, television audiences for the last few decades have been defined according to their uses of and gratifications from mediated content, and according to differences in social structure such as class, financial standing, education, and religion (McQuail, 1983; Inglis, 1990; Perry, 1996). Using segmentation to define audience composition stems from the market analysis approach. This approach is often but not exclusively used by advertisers to reach consumers and motivate their behavior by using advertisements that appeal to the common values found within market segments (Frank, Mass & Wind, 1972; Jamieson & Campbell, 1988).

A number of theoretical perspectives in the social sciences, however, suggest even greater audience diversity and heterogeneity than previously assumed (i.e. social semiotics, phenomenology, sociology of knowledge). In the television industry, recent trends such as broadcasters’ focus on female
viewers (Seplow, 1996) and the influence of videos and computers (Bower, 1985) have been used to explain some of the increased diversity among television audiences. However, some sociology-based studies have shown other possible variables that influence audience diversity (Babrow, 1988; Comstock, et al., 1978). One area of ongoing audience research is in the U.S. conservative religious community (Stout, 1994; Scott, 1994; Clegg, 1995).

The focus of this paper is to examine the influence of network ties (a theory more commonly found in sociology) in order to explain the television attitudes found among a sample of women belonging to a conservative religion: the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as the Mormons. A theoretical model showing the scope and direction of network influence on the Mormon women will be presented and statistically tested. The intention of this work is to contribute to the limited but important existing literature about mass media and religion.

Although most recent attention has focused on the influence of religion on politics, if the figures documenting the religiosity of U.S. people mean anything, religion should influence all aspects of daily life, including attention to the mass media... Both religion and the media can provide the narratives that define Americans as a distinctive people and that can influence individual opinions and behaviors. Religious leaders speak out
regularly about the mass media. Whether church members pay attention to advice from their religious leaders about media use, however, is an open question (Stout & Buddenbaum, 1996, p. 14).

A 1993 study (Stout) observed such a dichotomy between religious authorities’ counsel about television and the way in which female lay members viewed television. The study showed that within a sample of Mormon women there were three distinct groups who used television to serve different purposes and who perceived television in ways that ranged from an “evil influence” to the “family’s friend.”

What can account for this diversity of attitude toward TV even within a tightly knit religious group? There are several possible explanations. Demographics, the level of individual religious commitment, interpretive communities, opinion leaders, and informal personal influence (networks) each may play an influential role in shaping religious individuals into different media consumers. As theorist Littlejohn (1992) explains, audiences are made up of sub-communities based upon (a) how discriminating members of small groups are influenced by peers (network theory), (b) how media content is interpreted according to means worked out socially in groups (interpretive communities), and (c) the multiple-step flow model (opinion leaders).
In “Theories of Mass Communication” (1982), Defleur reviews several theories that explain how audience composition may be formed. These theories are: (a) the individual-differences theory based upon each individual’s situation derived from past experiences, (b) the social-categories theory which asserts there are social aggregates in American society based on characteristics of sex, age, education, income, and marital status, and (c) the social-relationship theory. This theory, based upon the research of Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, Elihu Katz, and others, suggests that informal relationships significantly affect audiences’ attitudes and behaviors.

Of the three theories presented by Defleur, the communications field tends to ignore or give less credence to the third—the social-relationship theory. While the power of personal influence on the formation of media behaviors and attitudes is no longer a disputed concept, it is often understated. In their 1988 article, “Interpersonal Versus Mass Media Communication: A False Dichotomy,” Everett Rogers and associate Kathleen Reardon state that to divide the effects of mass communication from interpersonal influence is “a disunifying distortion with far reaching implications” (p. 285). According to Rogers and Reardon, instead of disregarding social theories such as network theory, mass communication researchers should embrace these theories and use them to help make sense of the way in which mass media messages are received, interpreted, and
acted upon.

Theoretical development in the field of sociology has much to offer mass communication researchers as they explore the influence of network relationships on audience diversity. Building upon personal influence theories from sociology, some communications studies have already seen the significant impact personal communities can have (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981; Johnson, 1987). These studies employ the concepts of “communication networks” and “multivariate networks” to show the significance of informal relationships on an individual’s adoption or rejection of ideas. In addition, studies addressing the sociology of religion have also shown that network ties not only influence the adoption of ideas, but they can also significantly influence personal religious commitment levels and behaviors such as suicidal tendencies (Cornwall 1987, 1989; Pescosolido & Georgianna, 1989). Both the communications and sociology studies mentioned indirectly support the idea that media researchers may further their investigation of television audience diversity by studying the behavioral and attitudinal effects of network associations.
II. Research Question

This study sheds light on the role personal influence plays on shaping media audience diversity within a particular conservative religious group. This study will demonstrate that religious individuals with more religiously diverse network ties have more lenient attitudes and usage toward television.

In essence, the research question propelling this work is:

*How do the associations within a Mormon woman’s personal community influence her identification with certain female TV characters, affect her use of television, and determine her television programming selection.*

The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

1) There is a significant positive correlation between the percentage of out-group associations within a Mormon woman’s personal community and her identification with non-traditional female TV characters.

2) There is a significant positive correlation between the percentage of out-group associations within a Mormon woman’s personal community and her selection of entertainment focused TV programming.

3) There is a significant positive correlation between the percentage of out-group associations within a Mormon woman’s personal community and a utilitarian attitude toward television.
4) There is a significant positive correlation between the frequency of TV-related discussions within a Mormon woman's personal community and her utilitarian attitude toward television, her viewing of entertainment programs, and her identification with non-traditional characters.

The theoretical model in Figure 1 was constructed using theoretical concepts from the literature review and some initial zero-order correlations from this study's data. The model in Figure 1 shows the hypothesized influence of out-group network ties and frequency of television discussions as well as some demographic variables that may affect the final outcome. The model will be used as a base for the statistical analysis that is performed in Chapter Four of this work. The model assumes a direct positive correlation between the percentage of out-group ties and identification with non-traditional female TV characters. It also assumes out-group ties will have smaller but significant positive influence on both entertainment programming and a utilitarian attitude toward TV. The frequency of TV-related network discussions is also predicted to have an impact on all of the TV attitude and behavior variables as well as the number of out-group ties. Demographic variables such as age, education, and marital status of the women surveyed may affect all variables in the model. In addition, the model presumes inner correlations between identification, entertainment use of television, and having a utilitarian attitude toward TV.
Figure 1. Theoretical model

- Demographic Characteristics: Age, Education, Marital Status
- Utilitarian attitude toward television
- Percentage of out-group ties
- Identification with non-traditional female TV characters
- Entertainment use of television
- Frequency of discussions about television
III. Definition of Study Terms

Out-group (and in-group) associations

For the purpose of this study, out-group associations are defined as those associations within a Mormon woman’s network with individuals who are either not members of the Mormon church or who are reported by the woman herself as being non-active members of the Mormon church. Logically, in-group associations are network relationships with individuals who are active members of the Mormon church (see Cornwall, 1987, 1989).

Personal communities/networks

In this paper, the words “personal community” and “network” are used interchangeably. They can be defined as the group of people with whom a person closely associates on an informal level: friends, family members, neighbors, and co-workers (see Fischer, 1982).

Identification

Identification in this study is used to describe an admiration toward certain female TV characters. Such reported admiration indicates that the Mormon woman can relate to, or has a certain level of tolerance for, the character.

Non-traditional female TV character

A non-traditional TV character is one that does not portray the values and lifestyle outlined for LDS women by their church authorities. These
church authorities are called general authorities and they are considered by believing members of the LDS church as leaders who receive divine inspiration from God. These religious authorities have directed women (and men) of the LDS church to avoid alcohol, tobacco, profanity, and dishonesty. Both male and female members of the church are commanded not to have sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage. In addition, LDS women with children are counseled not to work outside of the home until her children are grown (Kimball, 1963; Benson, 1987).

Entertainment focused television programming

Entertainment focused programming consists of TV shows made for escapism. In this paper these entertainment shows are specifically: TV movies, hour long dramas, and comedy sitcoms. The LDS general authorities have warned members about this type of entertainment. Leaders in the LDS church during the church’s General Conference (a biannual meeting for all of the members of the church) attribute some of the violence and base sexual activity present in society today to the influences of television programming that portrays immoral behavior (Ballard, 1989; Christensen, 1993). There are articles in official LDS church magazines that discourage members about watching comedies and other television programming that do not reflect real life or that contain violent and sexual content (i.e. movies) (Walker, 1993; “Question & Answer,” 1994). There are additional published articles aimed
directly at LDS women which instruct them to avoid watching addicting shows such as the hour-long dramas (Strong-Thacker, 1991; Church, 1991).

Utilitarian attitude toward television

A utilitarian attitude toward television is when a person uses television in order to accomplish certain purposes such as companionship, something to talk about, part of a daily routine, and for something to look forward to. This attitude toward television is neither negative or positive, but it is an attitude of acceptance and use. It indicates that television is a central part of the woman's life.

IV. Study Justification

In the United States, conservative religions are growing (Halverson, 1994; Greeley, 1989). One such religion, the LDS religion, is the seventh largest denomination in the United States. According to 1992 data, the Mormon church has an annual growth rate of 2.16 percent (Christian Century, 1994, p. 345). LDS church authorities consistently warn members, and in particular female members, about the possible negative influences of television on moral character (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1991). At the same time, television networks are focusing more than ever on attracting female viewership (Bower, 1985; Seplow, 1996). Because of the conflict between LDS religious authorities’ counsel and the media's messages to women, female members of the Mormon church are an appropriate
audience to use in a study about influences on television audience diversity (Valenti & Stout, 1996).

The study outlined in this paper is not only beneficial to the fields of sociology and communications in determining the impact of network influence, but it is also beneficial to media specialists who study the television-viewing decisions of the sought-after conservative female viewer by illustrating the influence personal associates may have on her selection of TV programming and her acceptance of media messages.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

The mass do not now take their opinions from dignitaries in Church or State, from ostensible leaders or from books. Their thinking is done for them by men (sic) much like themselves, addressing or speaking in their name, on the spur of the moment...

—John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, 1867

I. Opinion Leadership Theory Versus Network Theory

Nearly 100 years after John Stuart Mill first suggested the importance of personal influence on human behavior and attitudes, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) provided the first empirical evidence of this concept. In their study of the 1940 U.S. presidential election, Katz and Lazarsfeld developed the term “opinion leader” to describe a person who influences the action or attitude of another. Since that time, the term opinion leader has been called by other names such as information leaders or adoption leaders (Rogers & Cartano, 1962). Later, sociologists broadened the theories of personal influence with the concept of “personal networks” also called “personal communities” (White & Boorman, 1976; Fischer, 1982).

There are several differences between opinion leadership theory and network theory. While both are based on personal influence, opinion
leadership focuses more on formal relationships while network theory dwells on the influence of informal associates. A second difference between the two theories is in their approach. Opinion leadership often tries to identify society's opinion leaders, and, once determined, how they became such. On the other hand, network theory delves into the nature and impact of an individual’s network ties. According to sociologists Bernice Pescosolido and Sharon Georgianna (1989), network theory studies these three critical aspects: (a) the structure of a personal community, (b) the function of such a community, and (c) how it operates within a larger cultural context (p. 45).

A third difference between opinion leadership and network theory is their theoretical origins. Opinion leadership was first described in Lazarsfeld’s political Elmira study as a two-step flow theory—mass media to opinion leaders and opinion leaders to followers (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). This two-step flow theory has been replaced with a multiple-step flow model. Even as a multiple-step model, however, opinion leadership does not go as in-depth as network theory. The theoretical base of network theory is from the “Chicago School” of sociology. In the 1910s through the 1930s, sociologists at the University of Chicago examined groups of people distinguished from one another on the criteria of their associates (Fischer, 1982, p. 7). In addition to studying the types of associates an individual had, the Chicago School also researched how these “social worlds” affected individuals.
Ultimately the society in which we live turns out to be a moral order in which the individual's position, as well as his conception of himself—which is the core of his personality—is determined by the attitudes of other individuals and by the standards which the group upholds” (Fischer, 1982, p. 8).

Despite the differences between opinion leadership and network theory, both perspectives are important when studying the impact of personal influence on behavior and attitude because both theories suggest that mass media have limited effects. Personal influence must be incorporated into audience research in order to have an accurate view of how media messages are received and interpreted.

**II. Opinion Leadership**

Everett Rogers (1962) defines opinion leaders as men and women “who exert personal influence upon a certain number of other people in certain situations” (p. 436). Other theorists and researchers give similar definitions (Jacoby, 1974; Richmond, 1974; Black, 1982; Weimann, 1991). The main premise of opinion leadership theory is that advice from an individual's opinion leaders regarding various issues plays a primary role in that person's adoption or rejection of certain beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Chan, 1990; Goldsmith & Desborde, 1991).

Since the mid 1950s, much research has been completed to identify the
characteristics of opinion leaders in terms of their social positions, media exposure, demographics, and personality traits (Greene, 1990; Weimann, 1991). The consensus of such studies is that opinion leaders share some type of authoritative role in the lives of individuals whom they influence. The weakness of some of these studies is their tendency to group opinion leaders of different types of people together. In criticism of such works, advertising researcher Kenny Chan (1990) says it is illogical to develop a “profile” of a general opinion leader because there is no such thing as “generalized opinion leadership” (p. 53). In other words, character traits of opinion leaders differ just as the character traits of the people or groups they influence differ. Several media scholars have emphasized the need for more research to further the understanding and validation of opinion leader characteristics as they relate to the communities they influence (Chan, 1990; Venkatraman, 1990). This is where the strength of personal community and network theory is seen.

III. Personal Communities and Networks

In the mid 1980s, a new lexicon permeated American society: networks, networking, networked. The concepts behind such vocabulary first emerged in the late 1970s under names such as communication climates, social support systems, and multivariate connections (Jablin, 1980, p. 327; Fischer, 1982, p. 3). A network or personal community refers to extended
family, friends, and associates that form the set of people with whom an individual is directly involved. With the advent of modern communications, networks are no longer constrained by geography. Instead, they are "social worlds" created by and centered around an individual (Cornwall & Thomas, 1990, p. 230). While papers about personal communities and networks were once few and far between in the communications field, there was an escalation of such studies during the 1980s (Farace & Mabee, 1980; Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982; Burt & Minor, 1983; Rice & Richard, 1985; Johnson, 1987). Perhaps the increased interest in networks came from the efforts of Everett Rogers, a communications theorists who often relies on theories from other fields to explain communications phenomenon (Rogers & Cartano, 1962; Rogers & Cavalcanti, 1980; Rogers & Kincaid, 1981; Reardon & Rogers, 1988).

There are two main areas of research in network analysis. The first is network description where the structure and composition of networks are discussed. The second area of study is where network influence or function is measured (Pescosolido & Georgianna, 1989, p. 45). While both areas are beneficial, network description is the less complex of the two—but important nonetheless. As researcher David Johnson (1987) explains, "[there are] different dimensions within the same functional network, more specifically [there is a] combination of attributes which detail in a richer way
relationships between individual actors" (p. 210). Johnson believes one must analyze network associations using three major variables: importance, frequency, and response satisfaction. Importance refers to the applicability of information received from a communication tie (i.e. task-related information). Frequency is the number of times someone in a network talks to an individual about certain information. Response satisfaction means how satisfied an individual feels with the way in which a relationship responds to you during an exchange of information (p. 211-213).

The second area of research is network influence. One of the most colossal efforts to understand the influence of personal communities was undertaken in the early 1980s. In 1982, sociologist Claude Fisher published “To Dwell Among Friends” wherein he analyzed the influence of personal communities on urbanism. He based the research on live interviews he and his associates conducted with more than one thousand individuals living in the United States. The book responds to these questions:

What shapes relations, and what consequences do different relations produce? For example, what types of people, living where, living when, turn to kin or to friends or to professional associates for various kinds of aid, or advice, or companionship? What difference does it make to individuals, or their families, or their society if their relations involve largely kin or largely
nonkin, people nearby or people far away, culturally similar or culturally dissimilar associates? (p. 2).

Network theory stresses individual agency and therefore is in direct opposition to mass society theory that some theorists strongly advocate (Fischer, 1982, p. 4). Fischer explains:

In general, we each construct our own networks. The initial relations are given us—parents and close kin—and often other relations are imposed upon us—workmates, in-laws, and so on. But over time we become responsible; we decide whose company to pursue, whom to ignore or to leave as casual acquaintances, whom to neglect or break away from...By adulthood, people have chosen their networks (p. 4).

Individual agency is paramount when discussing personal communities. The most widely discussed weakness concerning network influence is the ever-recurring question: Which comes first, the individual or the network? Fischer recognizes and addresses this weakness:

Do people with friends become happy, or do happy people make friends? Within their constraints and their preferences, people tend to build networks composed of others similar to themselves in background, position, personality, and way of life. People tend to associate with people like themselves. In that sense, networks
are ‘inbred’ (p. 126).

Even though one cannot say which came first, the network or the individual, Fischer emphasizes that his work and the work of other network analysts focus on how personal communities shape people “once they have arrived” (p. 9).

The compelling reason network analysis has become so popular is because networks tend to influence individuals on different levels and in various ways. This stems from the fact that networks are not always made up in a homogenous way.

Personal networks differ greatly from one person to another....Educated people tend to have larger networks than less educated people do; urban residents average fewer relatives than small-town residents do. But beneath gross trends such as these lies a great deal of individual and idiosyncratic variation (Fischer, 1982, p. 33).

Studies based upon Fischer’s work have revealed that differences among personal communities of what at first glance appear to be somewhat homogenous populations correlate to some substantial differences found in that population. For example, sociologist Marie Cornwall concluded in a 1987 paper that the percentage of “in-group” ties versus the percentage of “out-group” ties in the personal communities of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)
correlates to their level of religious belief and commitment (p. 44).

Based upon Cornwall's work that measures the impact of network influence on religious commitment, this paper investigates the influence of networks on television attitudes and usage of religious conservatives.

**IV. Religiosity**

In-depth study into the sociology of religion emerged in the 1950s. During this era, the problem of how to conceptualize religiosity became a major issue as seen in Glock's (1959) and Lenski's (1963) work. In the 1960s and 1970s, religion began to be examined as a multidimensional variable, one that could not be measured merely by recording the number of times an individual attended Sunday worship services. Rather, Glock and Stark's five-dimensional conceptualization of religious commitment began to be widely accepted as seen by its recurrence in the literature from that time (see Davidson, 1975; Dittes, 1971; Maranell, 1971). Regardless of the raised level of interest about the measurement of religiosity during this period, research about the effects of religion were relatively limited to political and economic attitudes (Grasmick, Wilcox & Bird, 1990).

In the last decade, more literature has surfaced dealing with how religiosity affects aspects of life such as health, marital satisfaction, alcohol consumption, marriage roles, and one's perception of well-being (see Hansen, 1987; Grasmick et al., 1990; Oleckno & Blacconiere, 1991; Cochran, 1993;
Mookherjee, 1994). Despite the numerous recent studies about religiosity's effects, very little attention has been given to the relationship between media and religion. When studies have treated both the media and religion, it is usually to discuss either religious programming found on television (Abelman & Neundorf, 1985; Jorstad, 1993; Peck, 1993) or viewing habits of religious denominations (Roberts, 1983; Hamilton & Rubin, 1992).

The lack of published work concerning the influence of religion and the media is not consistent with the fact that surveys repeatedly show the United States is by far the most religious of all advanced, industrial, democratic nations (Stout & Buddenbaum, 1996, p. 12). There is a need to "create a synthesis of ideas between mass communication research and the sociology of religion" assert Stout and Buddenbaum in their book, "Religion and Mass Media" (p. 5). Others seem to agree. "Especially absent in the literature is an investigation of the effects of religion on values and behaviors associated with the day-to-day workings of the family" (Grasmick, et al., 1990, p. 353).

Perhaps one of the largest obstacles in performing research about religiosity is to know how to define it. A lack of a clear definition leads to confusing results (Wimberley, 1989). For example, in "Behind Closed Doors" researchers found that religion [i.e. denomination] per se has minimal influence on marital violence (Strauss, Gelles & Steinmetz, 1983). In a later study however, researchers found religious commitment does have a
minimizing effect on marital violence (Brutz & Allen, 1986). Originating with Glock and Stark (1965), religion versus individual religious commitment has been differentiated. Studies have indicated that denomination is different than personal religious commitment. As researcher David Scott writes, “The institutional sense of religiosity is being dominated by personal belief systems which incorporate personal ideals and behavior into the interpretations of institutional dogmas” (1994, p. 22).

And from where does such a personal belief system come? One source is the associations in one’s personal community. As mentioned, research by sociologist Marie Cornwall shows a significantly positive correlation between in-group network ties and a religious individual’s level of religious commitment (Cornwall 1987, 1989). She also found the reverse: the greater the number of out-group ties, the weaker the level of religious belief and commitment. Cornwall argues that the theoretical backing behind her findings are as follows:

The social bases of religion are the processes by which individuals develop and maintain a set of religious beliefs. Individuals acquire their world view through socialization processes and by continued interaction with others. Individuals are then able to maintain these belief systems by continued interaction with significant others. These significant others form
a personal community which serves as a plausibility structure and helps maintain a particular world view (Cornwall, 1987, p. 45).

The research conducted by Marie Cornwall on the influence of network ties on a Mormon population will serve as a model for the research in this paper. A brief outline of Mormon belief will help the reader better understand this religion and why the “world views,” as explained by Cornwall in the above quote, often come into conflict with the media.

**Mormonism**

The Mormon church is the seventh largest denomination in the United States (Christian Century, 1994, p. 345). Mormons—members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—adhere to many conservative Christian beliefs such as strengthening family ties, personal purity, a patriarchal order, and community service (Thompson, 1993). The LDS church was officially founded on April 6, 1830 by its first prophet, Joseph Smith. From there it has grown to expand into a worldwide denomination of 8.8 million members. Mormons believe in modern-day revelation. Since its creation, the church has had at its head a designated prophet and twelve disciples that speak for the church (Stout & Buddenbaum, 1996, p. 86).

Twice a year in General Conference, the prophet, apostles, and other general authorities instruct members on how to resist
 temptations associated with modern times. Recently, leaders have exhorted members to protect their families from the potentially harmful effects of mass media. As they grow in numbers, Mormons are often encouraged to use television, movies, and other media in ways consistent with their religious goals (Stout & Buddenbaum, 1996, p. 86).

Despite their leaders’ consistent counsel against use of questionable media, some in a sample of Mormon women have shown more lenient television behaviors and attitudes. Interpretive community research offers one explanation about how these women interpret media messages in order to resolve their personal conflict with television (Stout, 1994).

V. Interpretive Communities

As described in the introduction of this paper, traditional audience studies are sometimes limited in their ability to explain audience phenomenon. Danish communications researcher, Klaus Jensen (1990), says this is due, in part, “to a restricted theoretical conception of audience studies” (p. 129).

The purpose of much previous research—both in the commercial and the academic sectors—has been to explain audience behavior in terms of demographic or social psychological variables, rather
than to elicit audience assessment of and participation in social communication processes (p. 129).

One theory that emerged in the early 1980s has helped give direction and scope to audience-based studies. Interpretive communities theory analyzes the recipients of mass communication not only as individuals from certain socioeconomic backgrounds, but also the ways in which individual members of an audience use discursive modes of interpreting media content (Jensen, 1990, p. 130).

Opposite to the deterministic models of mass communication, interpretive communities theory has shed light on why an audience with extremely similar social backgrounds have diverse attitudes and behaviors concerning media use (Carragee, 1990, p. 86).

In a study performed by Stout (1993), professor of communications at Brigham Young University, three different “interpretive communities” are defined in conjunction with the television behavior among a group of Mormon women. These interpretive communities are used to examine how individuals—belonging to what seemingly appeared to be a homogenous audience—interpreted certain issues using reference to community standards in creating varying interpretations of mediated content.

Even though the LDS church often publicly denounces certain television programs, messages, and characters, (Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints, 1991, p. 107; Christensen, 1993; “Question and Answer,” 1994), Stout discovered that the attitudes and behavior of the Mormon women surveyed did not always reflect these same conservative views. However, in three smaller subcultures (or interpretive communities) the women did share similar assumptions about television. Stout identified the interpretive communities as follows:

(a) **Traditionals**, young, affluent, and highly religious women who stress selectivity in their television viewing, (b) **Contextuals**, women who are highly religious, but unlike Traditionals, watch a wide variety of entertainment programs and experience guilty feelings in doing so, and (c) **Independents**, women who are older, less affluent, less religious, and view a wider variety of programs than the other women sampled. (p. ii).

Network theory is related to interpretive communities theory in that it is the personal associations within one’s network who, in part, influence the way in which differing interpretations of mediated content is shared. “The concept of interpretive community suggests that audiences do not uniformly conceptualize the role of television in their lives, but discursively make sense of their viewing within their everyday networks or social interaction” (Stout, 1994, p. 63).

Thomas Lindlof (1988), a theorist often credited for applying
interpreive communities research to the field of communications, is in agreement with Stout. Lindlof asserts, “Thus the criterial features of any interpretive community consist in the modes, meaning constructs, and frequency of its internal messaging” (1988, p. 82). In implementing Lindlof’s statement to networks, one must view “constructs” as the associates within a network and “internal messaging” as the conversations between an individual and his or her associates.

In a landmark article on interpretive communities published in the Communication Yearbook, Lindlof (1988) explained that his work with interpretive communities theory was inspired by “reader-response” models often found in literary studies. For example, in the work of Stanely Fish (1980), he focuses attention on how readers construct the meaning of literary texts. He postulates that when individuals read, “they belong to what is known as interpretive communities, each of which acts upon print differently and for different purposes” (Lindlof, 1988, p. 91). Even before the reader-response studies of Fish (1980), other researchers used the concepts behind interpretive communities theory (i.e. naturalistic inquiry) to understand why individuals understand the same activity differently (Geertz, 1983; Goffman, 1959).

One of the few criticism of interpretivism is that its distinctiveness from such earlier work in the anthropology field is sometimes not clear.
The recent turn toward interpretive study is often thought to represent a fundamental challenge to "traditional" media "effects" research... [However] a comparison of interpretivism with gratificationism in terms of underlying philosophical premises and technique of discovery reveals continuity rather than rupture between the two approaches (Evans, 1990, p. 147).

VI. Networks and Religion

Personal influence research often takes the shape of network analysis. Such analysis has been used to explain how the adoption of a new idea occurs and why diversity in communities exists (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981). One common use of network analysis has been in the study of religion.

Emile Durkheim strongly believed in the power of religion to help create and reinforce positive behavior within a society (Durkheim, 1915). Durkheim contended that membership in a religion significantly decreased one's chance of committing suicide (1951). Though this assertion has been widely criticized, two theorists in 1989 were able to partially support Durkheim's claim using network analysis (Pescosolido & Georgianna, 1989). They found that the more closely a person's network mirrored his or her religious beliefs, the lower was his or her chance of committing suicide. "We find denominations whose adherents report a greater average number of friends and relatives of the same religion have the greatest protective effect

On the other hand, they also found that if someone claimed membership in a religion but did not have a personal network that reflected such a religion, the religion’s “protective effect” was no longer present. They summarized their findings as such, “We find that across religious typologies, participation systematically varies in religious communities in a fashion consistent with network expectation” (p. 41).

Religion has at times shown to be a strong determinant of human behavior and attitudes (Oleckno & Blacconiere, 1991). Sociologists have defined religion as an important factor in not only helping individuals maintain unique beliefs about religious matters, but also with politics and economics (Lenski, 1963). However, to say that all members of a religious community are homogeneous in actions and beliefs is erroneous. In addition, not all personal networks of individuals belonging to the same religion are homogenous (Pescosolido & Gergianna, 1989). Studies have also shown that lay membership in a religion does not presuppose unquestioned acceptance of religious leaders’ attitudes and behaviors toward certain issues (Hastings, Reynolds & Canning, 1972; Valenti & Stout, 1996).

These observations: diversity within a conservative religious group, diversity in the composition of personal communities of the members in the group, and the discontinuity between religious authorities’ advice and the
attitudes and actions of lay membership, are related.

Sociologists Marie Cornwall and Darwin Thomas (1990), referring to a study conducted by Lenski (1963), summarize, “The religious subcommunity was a distinct social order with its own roles and normative expectations. It did more than just reinforce the teachings of the institutional church, and in fact, occasionally it came into conflict with the religious institution” (p. 233).

Such a conflict between lay attitudes and religious authorities’ attitudes is supported in a 1972 study about the LDS Church authorities’ teachings concerning birth planning and the attitudes of the church’s lay members. Even though LDS theology is heavily based upon statements made by leading church figures, the 1972 study found lay members did not follow authorities’ counsel against birth control when it came to family planning. One of the explanations the researchers gave for the apparent discrepancy was the impact of secularization which is directly related to personal communities (Hastings et al., 1972, p. 25).

While some studies question whether or not a person’s moral community acts as a reinforcer of religious thought (Lyon, 1985; Pescosolido & Gergianna, 1989), this paper examines the reverse principal expressed in Cornwall’s work:

It is therefore logical to assume that the introduction to alternative realities via conversations with significant others
whose subjective reality does not mirror the reality of the group will negatively influence the adoption of the group reality (1989, p. 574).
Chapter Three

Methodology

I. Area of Research

In an attempt to identify the significance of network ties on a sample of LDS women, this study uses data gathered in a survey executed by Daniel Stout, assistant professor of communications at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. The survey was conducted in 1992 and the results were printed in Stout’s 1993 dissertation. The survey—mailed to 702 Mormon women—focused on the religiosity of the women and their and attitudes and behaviors toward television. The survey contained a network chart—a modified version of Claude Fischer’s (1982) network tool—crafted by Stout and one of his dissertation committee members. The survey asked the women to list eleven of their closest associates and describe them by sex, proximity, type of relationship, frequency with which the respondent discussed television with the associate, and the associate’s religiosity (LDS or non-LDS). Stout never analyzed the data from this section of the survey, which was found on pages 10 and 11 of his original 13-page survey (see Appendix).

In order to support the hypotheses presented in Chapter One of this study, the data found in the unused portion of Stout’s survey was employed along with data from the other eleven survey pages. These two data sets were merged.
Using and analyzing data collected by another researcher is considered by most as an efficient way to use the wealth of information already available (Kiecolt & Nathan, 1985). According to Catherine Hakim (1982), secondary analysis is “any further analysis of an existing data set which presents interpretations, conclusions, or knowledge additional to, or different from, those presented in the first report on the inquiry as a whole and its main results” (p. 1). In part, this thesis will use some data that were previously used by Stout in his 1993 study on Mormon women. However, this paper also employs a secondary set of data that has not been previously analyzed. Since a portion of the data used in this study has already been analyzed by another researcher, the subject of secondary analysis is addressed.

In Hakim’s (1982) book, “Secondary Analysis in Social Research,” she specifies the types of secondary analyses researchers often use. She states that the most common type of secondary research is “an analysis based on a conceptual framework or theory not applied to the original analysis” (p. 1). This is the case between this body of research and the research completed in Stout’s work. While Stout used the data to identify interpretive communities through cluster analysis, the focus of this paper will be to examine how informal associations within an LDS woman’s personal community affect her television attitudes, usage, and identification.
II. Survey Information

The 1992 survey was executed using a purposive stratified random sampling. Of the total number of questionnaires, 29 percent were mailed to Mormon women living in Houston, TX; 34 percent to Mormon women Salt Lake City, UT; and 37 to Mormon women in Los Angeles, CA. The mailing yielded a response rate of 61 percent (429 respondents). Of the surveys returned, 37 percent were from Salt Lake City, 33 percent from Los Angeles, and 30 percent from Houston.

The survey was introduced to the LDS women by a cover letter that requested their participation and assured them anonymity. A complementary decorative bookmark was also enclosed with the survey.

According to descriptive research already performed by Stout, the LDS women who responded to the survey are more highly educated, affluent, and religious than LDS women in general according to demographic data compiled by researchers Goodman & Heaton (1986). In addition, a higher than average number of the women are married. The sample does reflect the larger population of LDS women in family size and employment outside the home.

III. Procedures

To determine if any correlations exist between the types of relationships in an LDS woman's personal community and her television
attitudes and usage, each of the network associates was analyzed according to gender, frequency of television discussions, and religiosity. This information was compiled into the variables: TVtalk (frequency of network discussions about television), out-group (the percentage of out-group associates within each network), and male (a variable found in initial testing to be insignificant). The information from this network analysis was then used in conjunction with data that defined each woman’s television behavior and attitudes. A woman’s television behavior and attitude were measured by doing factor analyses of three survey questions. Other survey questions dealing with age, marital status, and education of the respondent were also used to show if any of the variance was the result of demographic differences.

**IV. Factor Analysis Method**

The survey asked respondents to indicate to what measure she agreed with the statement, “I admire this TV character.” The characters listed play TV roles that range from very traditional women (i.e. Lucy Ricardo in “I Love Lucy”) to non-traditional women (i.e. Murphy Brown). A factor analysis indicated that identification with non-traditional female characters took shape in two forms: a) an identification with female TV characters that exemplified modern values that by LDS standards would be considered immoral, and b) and identification with female TV characters who depicted mothers who also had professional careers. Both of these groups qualify as
non-traditional according to LDS church counsel but in different ways.

In addition, the survey asked the women to indicate how often they watch certain types of television programs. These programs ranged from informational programming to educational shows to comedies and soap operas. This factor analysis showed various groups two of which were relevant to the study. The first group consists of TV programs with an entertainment focus. The second group contains shows with an information focus.

The respondents were also asked whether they strongly agreed to strongly disagreed with certain attitudinal statements about television. These statements show a variety of different views about television that ranged from positive to utilitarian to negative.

From these factor analyses five new variables were created: Modern (a three-item scale of a woman’s identification with modern female TV character), Professional (a two-item scale of a woman’s identification with professional TV mothers), Entertainment (a three-item scale of a woman’s selection of TV entertainment programming), Information (a four-item scale of a woman’s selection of TV informative programming), and Utility (a six-item scale of a woman’s utilitarian attitude toward television). Scores for Modern, Professional, Utility have a possible range of one through five. Entertainment and Information have a possible range from one to four.
To determine if there were simple correlations between any of the variables, zero-order correlations were performed. The zero-order matrix contained all of the scale variables from the factor analyses, the information from the network analysis about the type of network associates, and the demographic information of the surveyed women. To measure cumulative effects, all of the significant variables in the zero-order matrix were regressed in five equations using the dependent variables: Modern, Professional, Utility, Entertainment, and Information. The strength and significance of the standardized regression coefficients, or beta weights, were then compared in order to either support or not support the four hypotheses presented in Chapter One of this paper as well as the theoretical model.

V. Study Limitations

As previously mentioned, the network chart used in Stout’s 1992 survey was based upon network analysis performed by Claude Fisher in “To Dwell Among Friends” (1982). In Fisher’s research he used live interviews to attain the network data. For Stout’s work, face-to-face interviews were not feasible; therefore a survey method of data collection was used. Since the data were self-reported, this skewed the total number of associates per network that were listed. On the survey, there was space to include eleven associates (some women did include more at the bottom of the page). On the average, the surveyed Mormon women’s network included a total of 8.5 associates.
Fisher's research revealed, however, that on an average there were 18.5 associates per network (1982, p. 37).

Another limitation to the network data from the survey is that an associate's activity level in the Mormon church was not based on any criteria (e.g. this person attends church one Sunday or less per month). Instead, church activity level was determined solely on the surveyed woman's perception of her associate's church activity level.

The last limitation of the survey data is that the network chart did not provide a way for the surveyed woman to indicate which, if any, of her associates listed was her spouse. Therefore, in this study spousal influence cannot be separated from the influence of her other associates. However, whether or not the surveyed woman is married or not is used in the final statistical analysis.
Chapter Four

Results

I. Network Analysis

As a by-product of meeting specific individuals and deciding which relations to pursue, each person builds a personal network that has several collective properties. The group of people with whom he or she is involved may be cohesive or fragmented, homogenous or heterogeneous, spatially concentrated or dispersed, or may vary in a number of other ways—ways the individual usually did not plan in making or maintaining each particular bond (Fischer, 1982, p. 125).

Fischer found that individuals with similar demographics have networks that are often made up of associates also similar to each other in age, sex, education, religiosity, and marital status. However, he also discovered that some individuals within that same demographic group have network associates that do not reflect the group’s “norm.” One can assume therefore that the personal networks of Mormon women will be somewhat similar in composition.
II. Description of the Network Associates

On the average, the LDS women who completed the survey’s network chart reported 8.5 associates. One woman listed as few as three while others added additional lines (to the eleven lines already provided) in order to list more associates. On average 35 percent (34.5) of associates were male—a proportion of almost two women to one man. Interestingly, an average of 35 percent (34.6) of associates per network were either non-Mormon or were reported as being in-active Mormon (classified as out-group ties).

Respondents discussed television “sometimes” or “often” with an average of 42 percent of their associates. The network mean for discussing television was 2.34 on a scale where 1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, and 4 = often.

Immediate family members and close relatives made up a little more than half of the associates (54.9 percent). The rest of the relationships listed (45.1 percent) were either neighbors, co-workers, or friends.

Common demographics such as age, education, and marital status of the survey respondents may explain some of the variance among the religiosity of the network associates. For example, the average number of out-group associates seems to be higher in women over 45 years of age (see Figure 2). While the women under 45 years of age seem to have fewer than average out-group associates. The age group with apparently the highest
average of out-group ties were women over 61 years old. These mean differences between age groups, however, did not prove significant when tested using a oneway analysis of variance (F ratio = 1.47 with an F probability at .222).

Figure 2. Bar graph showing the mean of the percentage of out-group relationships within the LDS women's personal communities according to age group.

A second demographic variable that explains some of the variance found among the network is marital status of the survey respondents. An overwhelming 89 percent of the survey respondents reported being married. Figure 3 shows a 21 percent difference between the mean of out-group ties within a non-married woman's network and a married woman's network. A
oneway analysis of variance indicated that difference between the means of the two categories shown in Figure 3 is significant (F ratio = 17.05 with an F probability of .000).

Figure 3. Bar graph showing the mean of the percentage of out-group relationships within the LDS women's personal communities according to marital status.

![Bar Graph](image)

- **Marital status of survey respondent:**
  - Married: 53
  - Non-married: 32

Education level of the respondents was also significantly related to the percentage of out-group ties. Figure 4 shows the more education a woman has, the lower the mean percentage of network ties until graduate studies. Women who have pursued graduate studies had an average of 39 percent out-group ties—a mean 2 percent less than high school graduates. A college education indicates a lower than average percentage of out-group ties.
Figure 4. Bar graph showing the mean of the percentage of out-group relationships within the LDS women’s networks according to education.

![Bar graph showing the mean of the percentage of out-group relationships within the LDS women's networks according to education.](image)

A oneway analysis of variance substantiated that at least one of the categories was significantly different than the others. A Bonferroni matrix (Table 1) shows the college graduates have a significantly lower percentage of out-group associates than all of the other education levels.

Table 1.

A Bonferroni test with significance level .05.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No HS</th>
<th>HS Grad</th>
<th>Some Colleg</th>
<th>Colleg Grad</th>
<th>Grad Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No HS</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS Grad</td>
<td></td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Colleg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleg Grad</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Factor Analyses

The hypotheses presented in this paper presupposed the presence of out-group associations that would affect an LDS woman’s television behavior and perception. To test these hypotheses, two measures of the women’s television viewing habits were developed (Entertainment and Information), a measurement of the women’s attitudes toward TV (Utility), and two measurements of the women’s identification with certain non-traditional female TV characters (Modern and Professional).

The survey asked each respondent how frequently (ranging from “often” to “never”) they watched programs from a list of fourteen different television genres. The survey also asked the women whether they “strongly agreed” to “strongly disagreed” with the statement “I admire this TV character” as it related to a list of eleven different female characters that ranged in moral character from very traditional to non-traditional according to LDS doctrine. In addition, survey respondents indicated whether they “strongly disagreed” to “strongly agreed” with sixteen different attitudes toward television ranging from positive to negative.

Factor analyses of these questions demonstrated statistically significant groupings in each of the three survey questions. Tables 2, 3, and 4 present the loadings for the three factor analyses. The highest loading for each variable is underlined.
Table 2.

Rotated Factor Pattern Using an Oblique-Kaiser Transformation of the

Women's TV Viewing Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Factor 4</th>
<th>Factor 5</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.22351</td>
<td>0.10414</td>
<td>0.71657</td>
<td>0.25121</td>
<td>0.00754</td>
<td>PBS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.09733</td>
<td>-0.09447</td>
<td>0.17984</td>
<td>0.67727</td>
<td>0.14967</td>
<td>MOVIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.13138</td>
<td>0.03274</td>
<td>-0.23555</td>
<td>0.54940</td>
<td>0.01627</td>
<td>SITCOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.07747</td>
<td>-0.11830</td>
<td>0.13286</td>
<td>0.86344</td>
<td>-0.09238</td>
<td>HOUR DRAMAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.43051</td>
<td>0.15364</td>
<td>0.35975</td>
<td>0.05116</td>
<td>0.48361</td>
<td>NEWS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.17216</td>
<td>0.08973</td>
<td>0.31084</td>
<td>0.09178</td>
<td>0.65387</td>
<td>NEWS DOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.00769</td>
<td>-0.15372</td>
<td>-0.00974</td>
<td>0.09209</td>
<td>0.78315</td>
<td>CRIME DOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.12117</td>
<td>0.46343</td>
<td>-0.23400</td>
<td>0.39743</td>
<td>-0.08556</td>
<td>GAME SHOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.87570</td>
<td>0.04591</td>
<td>0.10570</td>
<td>0.00746</td>
<td>0.07671</td>
<td>MUSIC VIDEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.04119</td>
<td>0.85939</td>
<td>0.16152</td>
<td>-0.13474</td>
<td>-0.07142</td>
<td>SPORTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.04518</td>
<td>0.61439</td>
<td>-0.20186</td>
<td>0.01706</td>
<td>0.16092</td>
<td>SPECIALS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.27594</td>
<td>0.01175</td>
<td>-0.15819</td>
<td>-0.21887</td>
<td>0.81591</td>
<td>HUMAN INTER</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Soap operas and talk shows were eliminated from the model because of their questionable validity from the general factor analysis in Table 5.

Table 2.

Factor 4 in Table 2 indicates the programs which have primarily an entertainment focus: movies, sitcoms, and hour long dramas. This factor, labeled Entertainment, was used to create a scale that measured how much entertainment programming each woman watched. The scale was created by combining the three TV programs which loaded high in Factor 4 and then by dividing the sum by three. The higher the Entertainment score, the higher the entertainment use and vice versa.

In addition to the Entertainment variable, the factor analysis in Table 2 specified television programs with an information focus. From the programs
informative television was watched by each woman was created. This scale is labeled Information. It includes programs such as the nightly news, news documentaries, crime documentaries, and human interest shows.

**Table 3.**

**Rotated Factor Pattern Using an Oblique-Kaiser Transformation for the Women’s Identification with Female TV Characters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Modern Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Professional Factor 3</th>
<th>TV Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURPHY BROWN</td>
<td>0.52285</td>
<td>-0.22891</td>
<td>0.38228</td>
<td>0.52235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARRIET NELSON</td>
<td>0.00758</td>
<td>0.77671</td>
<td>-0.03374</td>
<td>0.022891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSEANNE CONNER</td>
<td>0.61776</td>
<td>-0.11437</td>
<td>0.05305</td>
<td>0.38228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARGARET ANDERSON</td>
<td>0.01175</td>
<td>0.82603</td>
<td>-0.09324</td>
<td>0.03374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAIRE HUXTABLE</td>
<td>0.06293</td>
<td>0.10552</td>
<td>0.66046</td>
<td>0.00758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REBECCA HOWE</td>
<td>0.76442</td>
<td>0.05907</td>
<td>-0.10614</td>
<td>0.77671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUNT BEA</td>
<td>-0.19204</td>
<td>0.71278</td>
<td>0.08515</td>
<td>0.19204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUCY RICARDO</td>
<td>0.22927</td>
<td>0.54865</td>
<td>0.12640</td>
<td>0.22927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELYSE KEATON</td>
<td>0.02275</td>
<td>-0.00104</td>
<td>0.74537</td>
<td>0.02275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Peg Bundy and Mary Richards were eliminated from the factor analysis because they did not have a loading higher than .45.

**Table 3**

Factor 1 and Factor 3 in Table 3 both represent female TV characters who could be classified “non-traditional” by the LDS church. Each of the characters under Factor 1 do not live the basic moral standards that have been set for LDS women by their church authorities. For example, Murphy Brown is a career woman who has a baby out of wedlock. Roseanne Conner often uses profanity, has little respect for her husband, and approves of her daughter having pre-marital “safe” sex. Rebecca Howe is a single woman who
often uses profanity, has little respect for her husband, and approves of her daughter having pre-marital “safe” sex. Rebecca Howe is a single woman who works in a bar and who engages in pre-marital sex with her fiancé.

The female TV characters in Factor 3 are more in sync with LDS moral standards, but they could be considered non-traditional because both of the women are mothers who have professional careers. Both Elyse Keaton from Family Ties and Clair Huxtable from The Cosby Show juggle successful careers with being wives and mothers. LDS authorities have counseled LDS women with children to stay at home unless financially unable.

In contrast to both of these groups is Factor 2 in Table 3. The characters in this group represent traditional women with extremely conservative values and lifestyles from the 50s and 60s. They are: Harriet Nelson from Ozzie and Harriet; Margaret Anderson from Father Knows Best; Aunt Bea from The Andy Griffith Show; and Lucy Ricardo from I Love Lucy. Each of these women are married (except for Aunt Bea who never married but lives with her widowed nephew and his family). None of these women works outside of the home, wears clothing that is revealing, or engages in any promiscuous activity.

Two new dependent variables, Modern and Professional, were created from the items that loaded high in Factors 1 and 3. Modern is a three-item scale using the answers to the woman’s admiration of Murphy Brown,
The higher the score on these variables, the higher the identification with modern and professional mother TV characters.

Table 4.

Rotated Factor Pattern Using an Oblique-Kaiser Transformation of the Women’s Television Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Attitudinal Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.04291</td>
<td>0.73773</td>
<td>-0.05163</td>
<td>LOOK FORWARD TO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.23032</td>
<td>0.64798</td>
<td>0.04986</td>
<td>WATCH TO GET AWAY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.01392</td>
<td>-0.02756</td>
<td>0.78752</td>
<td>TOO MUCH SEX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.10956</td>
<td>0.68546</td>
<td>-0.06726</td>
<td>PART DAILY ROUTINE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.77987</td>
<td>-0.04437</td>
<td>0.03711</td>
<td>EDUCATIONAL VALUE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.18938</td>
<td>0.49799</td>
<td>-0.16290</td>
<td>SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.80449</td>
<td>-0.01410</td>
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<td>0.79705</td>
<td>0.01092</td>
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<td>0.22853</td>
<td>0.06912</td>
<td>KEEPS ME INFORMED</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. Four attitudinal statements were eliminated from the factor analysis because their loadings did not exceed .45 in any of the factors. These statements were: “children & TV,” “suffer w/out TV;” “too many commercials;” and “prefer TV w/out ads.” The statement “I feel guilty watching TV” was also dropped from the factor analysis because it did not load into the general factor analysis in Table 5.

Table 4

Factor 2 under Table 4 indicates the items that measure a utilitarian attitude toward television. Factor 2 contains statements such as: “Television is something I look forward to each day,” “TV provides me something to talk about with my friends,” “TV is an important source of entertainment for me,” and “Television keeps me company” (see the Appendix for an entire listing of questions). Factor 2 is named Utility and is a six-item scale. The higher this variable, the stronger is the woman’s attitude that television is useful.
and "Television keeps me company" (see the Appendix for an entire listing of questions). Factor 2 is named Utility and is a six-item scale. The higher this variable, the stronger is the woman's attitude that television is useful.

Validity and Reliability of the Factors

In order to ensure the variables Modern, Professional, Entertainment, Information, and Utility are valid scales of what they purport to measure, a final factor analysis was performed using all of the items that compose the five scales. The loadings in Figure 5 show no interplay between the scales.

**Table 5.**

Rotated Factor Pattern Using an Oblique-Kaiser Transformation of all items used to create the variables: Modern, Professional, Entertainment, Information, and Utility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Factor 4</th>
<th>Factor 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>MOVIES</td>
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<td>-.13063</td>
<td>-.10000</td>
<td>.60618</td>
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<tr>
<td>SITCOM</td>
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<td>.12185</td>
<td>-.61485</td>
<td>-.04408</td>
<td>.33706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUR DRAMAS</td>
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<td>.14615</td>
<td>-.11112</td>
<td>-.03407</td>
<td>.71081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>LOOK FORWARD</td>
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<td>DAILY ROUTINE</td>
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<td>-.16113</td>
<td>.14421</td>
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<td>-.21894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Talk shows, soap operas, and watching TV makes me feel guilty were eliminated because their loadings did not fall into any of the five factors.
The reliability of the variables Modern, Professional, Utility, Information, and Entertainment was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient method. This test randomly selects multiple pairs of subsets from the scale in question and uses the composite correlation between all of the paired subsets as an index of internal consistency. Because of the way Cronbach's test works, scales that contain two items cannot be tested. Scales that contain three items can be tested but the alpha measurement may be low. More reliable alpha scores are possible from scales that contain four or more items. Modern had an alpha .46. An alpha this low is most likely due to the fact that Modern is made up of three items. Reliability tests using only two of the items in Modern resulted in similar alphas. A simple zero-order correlation of the two items that compose Professional was .33 with \( p = .000 \). Entertainment had an alpha of .59 and Information had an alpha of .67. Both of these are acceptable. Utility had the highest alpha of .80 (see bottom of Table 6).

**IV. Zero-order Correlation Findings**

The original theoretical model presented in Chapter One of this paper (see Figure 1) presented the presumed direction and magnitude of the correlations between all of the variables. The model posits a direct relationship between the proportion of out-group ties within an LDS woman's network and her identification with non-traditional female TV characters. It
also assumes an indirect influence between out-group ties and viewing TV programs with an entertainment focus as well as the attitude that television is useful.

Based upon the model, this paper's hypotheses are as follows:

1) There is a significant positive correlation between the percentage of out-group associations within a Mormon woman's personal community and her identification with non-traditional female TV characters.

2) There is a significant positive correlation between the percentage of out-group associations within a Mormon woman’s personal community and her selection of entertainment focused TV programming.

3) There is a significant positive correlation between the percentage of out-group associations within a Mormon woman’s personal community and a utilitarian attitude toward television.

4) There is a significantly positive correlation between the frequency of TV-related discussions within a Mormon woman's personal community and her utilitarian attitude toward television, her viewing of entertainment programs, and her identification with non-traditional characters.

The zero-order correlation seemed to support hypotheses one, two, three, and four (see Table 6).
### Table 6.

Zero-Order Matrix of the variables.

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TVTALK</th>
<th>OUTGROUP</th>
<th>UTILITY</th>
<th>ENTERN</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>MODERN</th>
<th>PROFES</th>
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<td>(414)</td>
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<td>(415)</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.029</td>
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<td>.019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean: 2.672 2.681 2.660 2.462 3.708
SD: .900 .658 .648 .649 .668
Alpha (reliability): .80 .59 .67 .46 .33*

Note. The * indicates this measurement is a zero-order correlation and not an alpha measurement.
At the bottom of Table 6, the mean for Utility, Entertainment, and Information is based on a scale where 1 = low and 4 = high. The mean for Modern and Professional is based on a scale where 1 = strongly non-admired and 5 = strongly admired.

As seen in Table 6, all of the scale variables means, except for that of Professional, are midrange. This indicates that on the average there is not a high level of TV use nor a widespread admiration of modern female TV characters. On the other hand, identification with professional mother TV characters had a higher mean of 3.708 out of 5. A paired t-test showed that the means of Modern and Professional were significantly different at a significance level of \( p = .000 \). This indicates that the professional women characters are more highly admired than the modern characters by the Mormon women.

Table 6 also presents the simple zero-order correlations. The correlation between the percentage of out-group associates and identification with modern female TV characters is the strongest correlation between out-group ties and any of the other variables in the model (.25). The zero-order test found no correlation between out-group and identification with professional mother characters. There were, however, significant correlations present between out-group and Entertainment (.13), Utility (.13), and Information (.15). The frequency of TV-related network conversations
appears to be strongly correlated to having a utilitarian attitude (.29) and watching information programming (.27) and moderately correlated to watching entertainment shows (.22) and identification with modern female TV characters (.20). Each of these correlations are stronger than the correlations with out-group ties except for the correlation with Modern.

A stronger significant correlation was found between Entertainment and Utility (.49) than between Information and Utility (.29). This indicates that those women who report television as being central to their lives are more likely to watch entertainment shows rather than informational shows.

A zero-order correlation, however, is only a simple measurement between two variables. It does not take into account how much of the variance can be explained by the interplay between the other variables in the model. To more accurately support this paper's hypotheses, a multiple regression is needed.

V. Multiple Regressions Findings

Five regression equations were tested on the five dependent variables: Modern, Professional, Utility, Entertainment, and Information. The summarized results can be seen in Tables 7, 8, 9, and 10.

The regression with Modern as the criterion variable supported part of the theoretical model and Hypothesis One (see Table 7). The percentage of out-group ties when regressed with the other variables is significantly related
to the sampled women's identification with modern female TV characters. The correlation had a beta weight of .25 at a significance level of \( p \leq .001 \). Out-group was the most significant of all of the variables in the regression and therefore the most directly influential—even more so than the frequency of TV-related conversation which received a beta weight of .12 with \( p \leq .005 \). Utility was also significantly correlated to Modern with a beta weight of .17 with \( p \leq .05 \). Interestingly, none of the demographic variables were significant even when they were forced into the equation. The adjusted \( R^2 \) measured .11 which means all of the variables in the regression equation explain about 11 percent of the variance found in identification with modern female TV characters. This equation supports Hypothesis One by showing that out-group associations directly influence identification with non-traditional female TV character when those characters are women who portray modern values.

In a second regression with Professional as the dependent variable, however, out-group influence was not significantly related to the identification with female TV characters who portray professional mothers (see Table 7). In fact, none of the network variables were significantly correlated. Rather, the demographics variables age (\( \beta = .17 \) with \( p \leq .005 \)) and marital status (\( \beta = .14 \) with \( p \leq .005 \)) played a much more significant role. The most influential variable in the second regression equation was the
amount of entertainment programming watched ($\beta = .21$ with $p \leq .001$). In total, all of the variables explained about 12 percent of the variance found in the variable identification with professional TV mothers (adjusted $R^2 = .12$).

Table 7.

Summary of the beta coefficients in the multiple regressions with Modern and Professional as the dependent variables.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Modern</th>
<th>Professional Mom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Age</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>-.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
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<td>-.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-group</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVtalk</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
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<td>.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
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<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
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<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid cases</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates $p \leq .05$

** indicates $p \leq .001$

The results from the multiple regression with Utility as the dependent variable are summarized in Table 8. The summary is separated into three blocks to show the indirect negative influence education has on a utilitarian attitude toward television. When education is in the equation without Entertainment, it has a significant beta weight of .11 with $p \leq .05$. However, when Entertainment is included in the regression equation, education is no longer significant. From this one can see that education has an indirect
negative influence on Utility through a direct effect on Entertainment. This is further supported by the simple zero-order test (Table 6) wherein significant negative correlations were found between education and Utility ( \( -0.12 \)) and Entertainment ( \( -0.20 \)).

The two significant variables in the final regression equation are Entertainment and TVtalk. The frequency of TV-related network discussions has a moderate influence ( \( \beta = 0.16 \) with \( p \leq 0.05 \)) on whether an LDS woman perceives television as being useful. Watching television programming with an entertainment focus, however, by far had the stronger beta weight of 0.45 with \( p \leq 0.001 \). This means there is a strong positive correlation between the watching of entertaining programming and the attitude that television is useful.

Since the percentage of out-group ties was insignificant, Hypothesis Three is not supported. However, Hypothesis Four is supported because the frequency of TV discussions is significant and substantial.
Table 8.

Summary of the beta coefficients in the multiple regression with Utility as the dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>Valid cases</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicated p ≤ .05
** indicates p ≤ .001

The multiple regression with Entertainment as the dependent variable is summarized in Table 9. This summary is also separated into three blocks to show the positive indirect influence TV-related discussions have on watching entertaining programs. Without Utility in the equation, TVtalk is correlated to Entertainment with a beta weight of .21 with p ≤ .001—a correlation only 1 percent weaker found in the zero-order test. However, once Utility is introduced into the equation, TVtalk is no longer significant. Unlike the zero-order test wherein out-group and Entertainment were correlated with a strength of .13, the multiple regression found no relation between the two variables. Education, however, remained a significant
variable with a moderately negative beta weight of -.14 with \( p \leq .05 \).

As expected, Utility and Entertainment are once again highly correlated (\( \beta = .48 \) with \( p \leq .001 \)). The variables in the equation account for 30 percent of the variance in Entertainment, meaning this equation explained more of the variance in the dependent variable than any of the other equations. Since out-group is not significant and TVtalk is, Hypothesis Two is not substantiated but Hypothesis Four is.

\textit{Table 9.}

\textbf{Summary of the beta coefficients in the multiple regression with Entertainment as the dependent variable.}

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>3rd block</th>
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<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-group</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVtalk</td>
<td></td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.48**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted ( R^2 )</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid cases</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates \( p \leq .05 \)
** indicates \( p \leq .001 \)

The independent variable in the final multiple regression was watching information programs (see Table 10). The variables found significant in this equation are the same as those found significant in Table 9: education, TVtalk, and Utility. This is not surprising because Information
and Entertainment are strongly associated with each other as seen by a high zero-order correlation of .36 with p ≤ .000 (see Table 6). The main difference, however, is that the correlation between Information and Utility (.19) is much weaker than the correlation between Entertainment and Utility in Table 9 (.48). This finding supports the conclusion from Table 8 that women who report television as being useful to them use it more to watch entertainment shows than to watch informative shows. The fact that education has a negative correlation (-.11) is also interesting. It shows that women with more education go to sources other than television for their news. All of the variables in the equation account for 14 percent of the variance found in Information.

Table 10.

Summary of the beta coefficients in the multiple regression with Information as the dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-group</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVtalk</td>
<td>.27**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-group</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVtalk</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td>.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-group</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVtalk</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid cases</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates p ≤ .05  
** indicates p ≤ .001
VI. Adapted Model

According to the five multiple regressions previously discussed, the theoretical model presented in Chapter One of this paper does not accurately reflect the significant correlations present. The model in Figure 5 shows the actual direction and flow of the correlations of the tested variables.

Figure 5. Model showing the direction of the significant correlations between the tested variables according to the multiple regressions.
Chapter Five

Discussion

I. Conclusions

Chapter One asked the question: How do the associations within a Mormon woman’s personal community influence her identification with certain female TV characters, affect her use of television, and determine her television programming selection.

From the results in Chapter Four, several conclusions can be made in order to answer parts of this question. An examination of the mean scores of Modern, Utility, Entertainment, and Information shows that on the average these women are suspect of television, its programs, and its more modern characters. Table 6 shows the mean scores for Utility, Entertainment, and Information range between 2.660 and 2.681 on a scale where 1 is low and 4 is high. The variable of Modern has an even lower tolerance by the women as seen by the mean of 2.5 on a scale where 1 is low and 5 is high. Identification with professional mothers, however, was more accepted by the women as seen by the mean of 3.708. A paired t-test showed that the mean score for Professional is significantly higher than the mean score for Modern.

Quantitative analysis in Chapter Four shows that tolerance of television, its programming, and its characters increases as the number of network out-group associates and frequency of TV conversations increases
and as the level of education decreases.

Specifically, results described in Chapter Four found that the number of non-LDS or inactive LDS associates is directly correlated to a woman’s identification with modern female TV characters. This correlation indicates out-group ties increase the LDS women’s tolerance of modern values or standards—standards that have been criticized by LDS church authorities.

This out-group effect is most likely a subtle one. For example, it could be that affiliating with more religiously diverse individuals over time may manifest itself in a broader interpretation of values depicted by TV characters. Another view could be that LDS women who condone modern values shape their personal communities with religiously diverse associates who will then sustain and enhance modern values and beliefs. Both interpretations would result in the relationship where the presence of out-group ties in an LDS woman’s network accompanies a tolerance of lenient morals in female TV characters. This conclusion reflects religious network research performed by Cornwall (1987, 1989). She found a correlation between the percentage of out-group ties and a lower level of personal religious commitment and belief in LDS church members.

While out-group ties is moderately to highly correlated (β = .25) to identification with modern female TV characters, that correlation is the only association between out-group and any of the other dependent variables. TV
discussions, however, are correlated to four of the dependent variables with significant betas. Frequent TV discussions with network ties directly correlates to a woman's identification with modern female TV characters (.12) and to her having a utilitarian attitude toward television (.16). TV discussions also has an indirect correlation to watching entertainment programming (.21) and a direct correlation to watching informative programming (.21). The correlations with TV discussions are consistent. This reoccurrence shows that talking about TV plays a role in the process of developing more tolerant habits and attitudes toward television.

This conclusion is not surprising when one examines personal community theory. Building upon Fischer's belief that "individuals' bonds to one another are the essence to society" (1982, p. 2), this paper supports the idea that if those bonds Fischer spoke of have a common interest in television, then television will become an important part of one's life.

Fischer also concludes that "It is through personal ties that society makes its mark on us, and vice versa" (1982, p. 3). The relevance of this statement to mass communications can be applied if "television" is substituted for "society." The adapted version of Fischer's statement would read: "It is through personal ties that television makes it mark on us, and vice versa." This adapted statement rivals the rhetoric of popular media critics such as M. Medved (1992) and W. Fore (1987). While such critics
assert that television has an “all powerful” influence on those who watch it, the correlations found between television discussions and certain TV attitudes and behaviors indicate that television’s influence must pass through certain channels before affecting an individual. One such channel is the approval or level of importance television receives verbally within one’s personal community.

A third conclusion from Chapter Four is the affect education has on the formation of the women’s personal community as well as how it negatively influences television behavior. A oneway analysis of variance showed that the women who are college graduates have significantly fewer out-group associates than all of the other women. Only 23 percent of the associates of the college graduate are reported as out-group. That is 12 percent lower than the average.

Conversely, on a national level Fisher found the one characteristic that most consistently affected the diversity of networks is education. He found the more education a person has, the more diverse is his or her network. “In general, education by itself meant broader, deeper, and richer networks” (1982, p. 251).

On the surface there seems to be a discrepancy between this study and Fischer’s findings. This may stem from the influence of LDS-sponsored colleges and universities. If, for example, the majority of the women who
graduated from college attended one of the private religious colleges or universities that the LDS church operates (BYU, Ricks college, BYU-Hawaii) then one could assume many of the associations the woman made during her college years would be LDS church members.

Even though the influence of education did not have the expected results on the formation of network ties, it did influence television behavior according to national trends. Results in Chapter Four found that the more education a woman has, the less likely she is to use television for entertainment and information purposes. Education also had an indirect negative affect on having a utilitarian attitude. On a national level, a climb in education is believed to be the number one reason for the steady decline in positive attitudes toward television and television usage.

By far the most significant change has been the spread of education. The proportion of the U.S. adult population without a high school diploma was cut nearly in half between 1960 and 1980, and the proportion of those with some college education almost doubled. Given the high negative correlation between formal education and attitudes toward television, it seems clear that the increased education in the population at large may be an important factor in any overall changes in attitudes toward the medium (Bower, 1985, pgs. 8-9).
The last of the conclusions from Chapter Four is the strong correlation between having a utilitarian attitude toward television and the use of television for entertainment purposes. These two variables were highly correlated as seen by their beta weights of .45 with $p \leq .001$ (when Utility was the dependent variable) and a beta weight of .48 with $p \leq .001$ (when Entertainment was the dependent variable). The relationship between these two variables reveals that the use and gratification of television as an entertainer or friend increases in women who report TV as being central to their lives. In the theory of uses and gratifications, an individual's independent need for information, emotional satisfaction, or escapism is met through television often because there is no other source. If the women in this study who report television as being central to their lives use TV for entertainment and companionship, this sheds understanding on social needs that are not being fulfilled without television.

**II. Implications**

Two communications studies testing essentially the same research question wielded opposite results. The question was, “How does religious conservatism affect one’s television viewing and attitudes?”

The first study, published by associate professor Churchill Roberts (1983), found that members of the Moral Majority (a group comprised largely of evangelical and fundamentalist Christians) watched just as much sexual
and violent programming as a cross-section of that same community. An unrelated project by Hamilton and Rubin (1992), showed that religious conservatives (a) were less motivated than non-conservatives to watch television because of sexual appeal of character, (b) watched fewer programs with sexual content than non-conservatives and (c) felt television was less important in their lives than non-conservatives did.

What can account for the different results? The correlations found between television attitudes and behavior with out-group ties and TV discussions reveals the impact social network theory may have on further defining audiences in mass communications.

Network influence helps individuals define the role of television in their lives. Through conversations, network ties set the agenda of what is important to the individual to whom the network belongs. Where some market analysts might assume the role of television among a religiously conservative audience to be homogeneous, network influence reveals one reason why this is not always the case. The results in this work support the idea of television audience individuality even within conservative religious audiences.

The concept of audience individuality within religious communities is not a new one. Valenti and Stout addressed the subject in their 1996 article:

Is there media diversity within conservative religious
subcultures, and, if so, what effect might this have on how media are used? Our goal is to add to the understanding of audience individuality, what we are calling diversity within audiences (p. 187).

This research shows that tolerance toward TV changes even within members of a religion that stresses following ecclesiastical authorities who regularly warn members about television. Consequently, it is not just the media and their messages that create audiences as television critics Medved (1992) and Fore (1987) argue. Social environment is a key element in the adoption or rejection of ideas (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981) which includes media behavior and attitudes. As this study and other studies have shown, personal community ties influence individuality whether it be with television or other attitudes and behaviors. This study lends an answer to the implied question asked by television analyst Robert Bower:

We have seen how little difference either the most important background characteristic of the viewers or their expressed views about TV content made in determining what sorts of programs people will watch... It appears as though factors other than predispositions and expressed preferences are affecting program choices (1985, pgs. 92-93).
III. Recommendations for Further Research

Further research on this subject is not only possible, but it is recommended in order to more fully interpret what this research has uncovered. Live interviews with the population, (similar to the in-person interviews Fischer and associates conducted in “To Dwell Among Friends,”) would bring to light many of the additional questions this research spawns (e.g. the strength of spousal versus friend influence, the differences in network influence on media use between male and female religious conservatives, the impact of network influence on different interpretive communities within a conservative population.)

Qualitative research could delve deeper into the network ties and facilitate research defining network ties by strength as well as by gender, proximity, religiosity, and media involvement.

Pertaining to the social, psychological perspectives, focus groups may further uncover why women who follow their church authorities’ counsel about television more likely have conservative associates. What cognitive and affective processes are involved when religious conservatives decide who to include in their networks?

Another avenue for possible research within the LDS community would test the question of if and how “liberal” use of television correlates to other liberal uses of media (i.e. watching R-rated movies, reading books
known that contain violence/sex).

As more audience researchers test for audience individuality, this researcher believes the variable of personal influence will undoubtedly be seen as an influential factor. Television audience individuality and networks are correlated. How closely and in what ways they are related, however, are questions that, for the most part, are still to be explored.
References


Appendix

Example of survey sent to the sample of Mormon women

EXPERIENCE WITH TELEVISION: We would like to know a little about the nature of your television viewing. Place a check next to your answer, or fill in the blank where appropriate.

1. On the average, how many hours per day do you watch television?
   ___ 1 0-1 hour
   ___ 2 1-2 hours
   ___ 3 2-3 hours
   ___ 4 3-4 hours
   ___ 5 4-5 hours
   ___ 6 5 or more hours

2. Which of the following best describes your television viewing pattern? (Check all that apply)
   ___ 1 I watch in the early morning.
   ___ 2 I watch during the day while working around the house.
   ___ 3 I watch in the evenings.
   ___ 4 I watch late at night.
   ___ 5 I watch several times throughout the day.
   ___ 6 Other: ________________________________

3. On a typical night of TV viewing with family members, who chooses what is watched?
   ___ 1 I usually do.
   ___ 2 My husband usually does.
   ___ 3 My children usually do.
   ___ 4 It varies from night to night.
   ___ 5 Other. Please explain: ________________________________
   ___ 6 I do not watch television at night.

4. On a typical night of TV viewing with family members, who uses the "remote control" device to change channels?
   ___ 1 I usually do.
   ___ 2 My husband usually does.
   ___ 3 My children usually do.
   ___ 4 The remote control is shared by family members.
   ___ 5 Other. Please explain: ________________________________
   ___ 6 I do not have a remote control device.

5. What are some of your favorite television programs--those you watch regularly or whenever you get a chance?

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

1
6. How often do you watch the following types of television programs?

(Circle number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF PROGRAM</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBS (shows such as Nature and Masterpiece Theatre)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies (either regular films or made-for-TV movies)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation Comedies (such as The Cosby Show or Who’s the Boss)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hour-long Dramas (such as L.A. Law and Murder, She Wrote)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News (such as evening news or CNN)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Documentaries (such as 60 Minutes and 20/20)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Documentaries (such as America’s Most Wanted and Unsolved Mysteries)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk Shows (such as Phil Donahue and Oprah Winfrey)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Shows (such as The Price is Right and Jeopardy)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap Operas (such as The Young and the Restless and General Hospital)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Circle number)</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Video (such as MTV or Friday Night Videos)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Programs (such as NFL Football and Pro Tennis)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety or Specials (such as the Miss America Pageant and the Academy Awards)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late-night human interest/news (such as A Current Affair or Inside Edition)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. WOMEN ON TELEVISION. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement, "I admire this TV character." (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = no opinion; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

(Circle number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I ADMIRE THIS TV CHARACTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Murphy Brown ("Murphy Brown")
- Harriet Nelson (Ozzie and Harriet)
- Roseanne Conner ("Roseanne")
- Margaret Anderson ("Father Knows Best")
- Clair Huxtable ("The Cosby Show")
- Rebecca Howe ("Cheers")
- Aunt Bea Taylor ("The Andy Griffith Show")
- Peg Bundy ("Married With Children")
- Mary Richards ("The Mary Tyler Moore Show")
- Lucy Ricardo ("I Love Lucy")
- Elyse Keaton ("Family Ties")
8. ATTITUDES ABOUT TELEVISION: Circle a number for each of the following to show whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about television (1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= no opinion; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Circle number)</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television viewing is something I look forward to each day.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are better off without TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch TV to get away from the ordinary cares and problems of the day.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much sex on TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer TV without commercials.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If we didn’t have TV, our family life would suffer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television is a consistent part of my daily routine.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV has educational value.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find commercials very helpful in keeping me informed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV provides me with something to talk about with my friends.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV can be the source of positive family experiences.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much violence on TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV is an important source of entertainment for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV keeps me company when alone.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often feel guilty watching TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV keeps me informed about what is going on in the world.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. In the last 60 days, have you done any of the following? (Check all that apply).

   ___ 1 Rented a movie.
   ___ 2 Read a book.
   ___ 3 Gone to a movie.
   ___ 4 Bought a book.

10. How often do you use the movie ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R, NC-17) in making a decision to rent a movie?

   ___ 1 Always
   ___ 2 Often
   ___ 3 Occasionally
   ___ 4 Never
   ___ 5 I do not rent movies.

11. Which of the following religious publications do you subscribe to? (Check all that apply)

   ___ 1 The Ensign
   ___ 2 Dialogue
   ___ 3 The Church News
   ___ 4 Sunstone
   ___ 5 The New Era
   ___ 6 BYU Studies
   ___ 7 Exponent II

12. On the average, how much time would you say that you spend reading a newspaper during a given week?

   ________ hours
13. RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT AND ACTIVITY: We now would like to know more about your religious beliefs, activities, and values.

Circle a number for each of the following to indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = not sure; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is life after death.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My relationship with the Lord is an important part of my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some doctrines of the LDS Church are hard for me to accept.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bible is the word of God.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Smith actually saw God the Father and Jesus Christ.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Holy Ghost is an important influence in my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t really care about the L.D.S. Church.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true church on the earth.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love God with all my heart.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church programs and activities are an important part of my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to do whatever the Lord wants me to do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not accept some standards of the L.D.S. Church.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without religious faith, the rest of my life would not have much meaning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The L.D.S. Church puts too many restrictions on its members.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. How well do the following statements describe you?

(circle number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIBES ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I live a Christian life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share what I have with the poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am honest in my dealings with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I encourage others to believe in Jesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seek God’s guidance when making important decisions in my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I forgive others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I admit my sins to God and pray for his forgiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am spiritual person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION: We would like to know what kinds of religious activities you participate in and find meaningful.

15. How frequently do you and your family do the following things together? (Circle number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A few times</th>
<th>A few times</th>
<th>A few times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Have family Prayer
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - 7

- Have religious discussions
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - 7

- Read the Bible or other scriptures
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - 7

16. Other than blessing the food, how often do you usually have personal prayer?

  __1__ Never
  __2__ Only during times of special need
  __3__ Monthly
  __4__ A few times a month
  __5__ Weekly
  __6__ A few times a week
  __7__ Daily

17. In the past twelve months, how often have you attended the following L.D.S. Church meetings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A few times</th>
<th>A few times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Sacrament Meeting
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5

- Relief Society*
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5

*If you are involved in Primary or the Young Women’s Organization, indicate what your Relief Society attendance would be if you were not involved in these organizations.
18. FAMILY, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS. We are interested in knowing about the people you associate with and those with whom you might discuss issues related to television.

Please list in the first column below all the adults who are important to you in your life. Please use first names or initials that only you can identify. List all family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers who are:

A People you depend on for help with day to day problems. This includes taking care of your children, helping with work around the house, borrowing tools or equipment, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List the people with whom you associate:</th>
<th>IS THIS PERSON:</th>
<th>IS THIS PERSON:</th>
<th>TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Female</td>
<td>1 = Immediate</td>
<td>1 = Depend on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 = Male</td>
<td>family</td>
<td>for help with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 = Close relative</td>
<td>day to day problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Neighbor, co-worker, etc.</td>
<td>2 = See on a regular social basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = Friend</td>
<td>3 = Talk with about worries or concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write the appropriate number in the box below:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Circle ALL that apply</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. 1 2 3
2. 1 2 3
3. 1 2 3
4. 1 2 3
5. 1 2 3
6. 1 2 3
7. 1 2 3
8. 1 2 3
9. 1 2 3
10. 1 2 3
11. 1 2 3
B. People you see on a regular basis. You may have dinner with them, go to the movies together, or share hobbies or special interests.

C. People you talk with about personal worries and concerns, or whose advice you seek before making a decision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU DISCUSS WHAT YOU WATCH ON TV WITH THIS PERSON</th>
<th>IS THIS PERSON A MEMBER OF THE LDS CHURCH?</th>
<th>IS THIS PERSON AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE LDS CHURCH?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Never</td>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 = Seldom</td>
<td>2 = No</td>
<td>2 = No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 = Often</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLEASE LIST EACH PERSON ONLY ONCE. Space has been provided for eleven names. Please select the eleven that are most important to you. When you have completed the list, answer the questions in each of the six columns across the page.
19. What is your age?
_____ years

20. What is your current marital status?

1 single (never married)
2 married
3 widowed
4 separated
5 divorced but not remarried

21. If married, what type of marriage ceremony did you have?
(for current or most recent marriage)

1 Civil
2 Church
3 Civil or church followed by temple sealing
4 Temple Marriage
5 Never Married

22. Do you have any children?

1 yes
2 no

23. If you do have children, how many?


24. Last week, were you staying at home, employed full-time, part-time, going to school or what?

1 employed full-time (either for employer or self-employed)
2 employed part-time
3 in school full-time (or on summer vacation)
4 full-time homemaker
5 unemployed, laid off, looking for work

25. If you have a full or part-time job outside the home, what is your occupation or job title?


26. If married, what is your spouse’s occupation?


27. What is your total annual household income? (that is, not just yours if there are others contributing to the family income)

_____ 1 less than $9,999
_____ 2 $10,000 - 19,999
_____ 3 $20,000 - 29,999
_____ 4 $30,000 - 49,999
_____ 5 $50,000 or more

28. Circle the highest grade in school you have completed.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  9 10 11 12  13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+  
Elementary  High School  College, Technical, or Graduate School

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The things you consider most important about your television viewing and religious life may not have been covered in this questionnaire. Please feel free to make any additional comments in the space provided below (use back of this page if more space is needed).

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP. YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE. NOW, PLEASE PLACE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED AND MAIL IT TODAY. BE SURE TO MAIL THE POSTCARD TOO.
The Influence of Out-group Network Ties on the
Television Usage and Attitudes of Mormon Women

Lois D. Brown

Department of Communications

M.A. Degree, April 1997

ABSTRACT

Analysis of survey data collected from more than 400 LDS women (n=429) indicates that as the number of non-LDS or inactive LDS network associates increases, so does the women's identification with modern female TV characters. The frequency of network conversations about television also correlates to several television behaviors and attitudes such as watching entertainment and informational TV programming, identifying with modern characters, and regarding TV as useful. Mirroring the national trend, LDS women who are more educated use television less. A model is presented which details the flow and impact of personal network influence on the television habits and attitudes of a group of LDS women. These findings support the theory of audience individuality even within a highly conservative religious group of media users.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL: Daniel Stout, Committee Chair

Marie Cornwall, Committee Member

Katherine Egan, Committee Member

Daniel Stout, Graduate Coordinator