Risk-Taking Predispositions Among Mormon Women: Improving Communication About Health and Environmental Risks

Shelly Nicholls
Brigham Young University - Provo

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Risk-Taking Predispositions Among Mormon Women: Improving Communication About Health and Environmental Risks

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Shelly Nicholls
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JoAnn M. Valenti, Committee Chair

Larrie E. Gale, Committee Member

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Date

Daniel A. Stout, Graduate Coordinator
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CHAPTER ONE

Count the number of cars that pass you as you drive 60 mph on the freeway, look on the side of the road to see an oversized billboard promoting smoking as something beautiful people do, or attend the state fair and see people jumping from towers with a bungee cord attached to their ankles. Ours is a risk-taking society. In spite of information presented to the general public, some people remain unaware of or unconcerned about the many risky choices their lifestyles present. Information can be found in many sources about the risks we take with our own health, as well as with that of those around us.

Pollution of drinking water and industry’s fight to curb pollution of land, air and food supplies evidence everyday potential of environmental risk. Our society has adjusted to lives full of risk. The Wall Street Journal offered a front-page story headlined: "Smoke and Mirrors: How Cigarette Makers Keep Health Question 'Open' Year After Year" (Freedman & Cohen, 1993). The story goes on to "expose" the longest running misinformation campaign in U.S. business history. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control today links 434,000 deaths a year to smoking. In the article the surgeon general declares smoking "the single largest preventable cause of death and disability," citing "overwhelming evidence from no less than 50,000 studies" (p. 1). Later ("EPA Pamphlet", 1993) the Wall Street Journal covered EPA’s issuance of a pamphlet that recommended methods offices, restaurants, bars and private residences could utilize to restrict nonsmokers exposure to tobacco smoke. Another Wall Street Journal article in September profiles a community’s fight against the Environmental Protection Agency removing high-lead soil because the citizens of the community "feel" healthy
Acceptance of some level of risk has become a way of life for many if not the majority.

Mass media play the role of transmitter, as well as of translator of information provided by expert and lay sources. How effective media have been at this role has been questioned. How effective media can become at providing information about choices that concern health and the environment has become one of the compelling communication research questions. Approximately one third of the American population still choose to smoke, despite repeated articles and warnings throughout the media about smoking's hazard to good health. How many read an article like the above Wall Street Journal piece and change risky behaviors? Does anyone actually stop smoking after such an article is run? Does even a follow up article, "EPA Pamphlet to Tell Ways to Cut Exposure to Tobacco Smoke," cause a change in behavior? As Keeney and von Winterfeldt (1986) note, communicating health and environmental risks to a mass audience to influence the audience's attitudes and response toward the risk poses problems for the modern mass communicator.

Added to the above stated problems is the recent research into gender differences that have raised serious questions about the ways men and women process information. Gilligan (1982) goes so far as to state that in hearing people talk about themselves she "began to hear a distinction...two modes of describing the relationship between other and self" that became apparent during an observation of women for a study about the relation between "judgment and action in a situation of moral conflict and choice" (p. 1). It is her conclusion that there are different modes of thinking and interpreting relationships between men and women when evaluating social contexts. What does this mean to a mass communicator designing messages meant to inform the entire population, or an audience of potential risk takers, both, male and female?

**Background of the Problem**

Since medical science identified the AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)
epidemic as a sexually transmitted disease in the 1980s, the incidence of HIV positive and AIDS victims continues to rise among teenagers despite public awareness campaigns about this health risk. Why aren't teens listening to the messages directed to them and modifying their behavior? The answer is complex and may relate to Gilligan's findings as well as to Keeney and von Winterfeldt's.

Accompanying the growing interest in risk communication has been an increasing awareness of the need to evaluate risk communication efforts (Weinstein & Sandman, 1993). How to better communicate risks to mass audiences so that the risk is understood by the audience has been the focus of study for Ferguson and Valenti in the last decade (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1989; Ferguson & Valenti 1990; Ferguson & Valenti, 1991; Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991). Ferguson and Valenti have utilized risk-taking measures modeled on those developed by Zuckerman (1971) and the Eysencks (1978). The evaluated populations are diverse and considered fairly representational of the general American population as a whole (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991). Ferguson and Valenti's work points to several significant indicators of a predisposition to risk taking. Among those factors, including gender, age, education, and a host of attitudes toward seeking adventure or thrills, is religiosity.

In 1991, Ferraro and Albrecht-Jenssen stated that "religion may have both positive and negative effects on health, although...the positive effect was stronger" (p. 193). Ferraro and Albrecht-Jenssen reiterated that certain denominations, such as the Latter-day Saints and Seventh-Day Adventists maintain strong proscriptions against behaviors known to affect health (e.g., smoking). Concluding that higher levels of practice of religion are generally associated with better health, Ferraro and Albrecht-Jenssen also stated that within varying levels of practice, people with a more conservative affiliation have poorer health. "Members of conservative denominations are more likely to be lower on the social class ladder, and it is clear that lower social class is correlated with poorer health. ...(P)eople associated with conservative denominations might be more fatalistic in dealing with illness trajectories, feeling that they are
inexorably determined by higher powers” (p. 198).

Albrecht (1989) has reported "the overwhelming majority of Americans--95 percent--say they believe in God....At the same time, there is a very clear lack of depth in the religious experience of most Americans. While virtually every home in this country has at least one Bible, biblical illiteracy is very widespread..." (pp. 59, 60). His research has further identified that over 90 percent of the American population self-identify a religious preference, yet a "significant" number no longer identify with the church of their birth--representing a constantly shifting religious landscape. With this background he contrasts the growth and continued commitment of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (Mormon is the slang term used to identify this church, as is the term LDS.) This commitment effects Mormon attitudes and behaviors towards family associations; members of the Mormon church are more likely to marry, less likely to divorce, are more likely to remarry if they do divorce, and are likely to have more children. Albrecht concludes "there is a clearly-defined impact associated with one's religious affiliation" (p. 88). He then turns to the impact of education upon religious commitment showing the negative impact of "education upon religiosity," except among the Mormons where his studies of Mormons samples "demonstrate a strong positive relationship between level of education and religiosity" (p. 103).

Using Ferguson and Valenti's work among a diverse population, this study looks at a specialized population, specifically a religious group of women. Ferguson and Valenti's earlier data indicated few predisposed to risk aversion. This study aims to investigate as part of Valenti's ongoing work, a religious population in Utah considered conservative and thought by the researcher to be ripe for risk aversion.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY

Are there a majority of people predisposed to risk taking with their health and the
environment found among a predominately religious group, in this case Mormon women, and how can the mass communicator best communicate risks to this audience? Targeting women in one American religious population, namely Mormon, this study attempts to replicate the work Ferguson and Valenti have done to identify those predisposed to taking risks with their health and the environment, and improve communication of risk messages to those predisposed to risk taking.

This study seeks to continue the ongoing work of Ferguson and Valenti to develop more effective communication strategies for presenting information about environmental and health risks to those predisposed to take risks. The medical costs associated with a health risk like smoking influence the quality of life for those affected by disease as well as those financially impacted by increased medical costs through insurance and utilization of resources for care and research to cure disease avoidable through a healthy lifestyle. Because the existing research reveals some gender differences, as well as effects from religiosity in risk taking, this study focuses on women who are members of the Mormon Church. This population provides a focus in contrast to the pluralist society previously studied by Ferguson and Valenti. The LDS church is considered to represent a conservative society, not a pluralist one.

Although this thesis attempts to replicate the Ferguson-Valenti work, it is expected that there will be less predisposition to risk taking among such a conservative population. There is a strong cultural bias toward following the counsel set down by those with leadership authority within the church. Questioning of doctrine and some cultural norms is not openly sought. Also, members of the LDS church are, on the average, more educated than the general population. While most research has shown a negative relationship between education and religious commitment, it often shows a positive relationship between education and church attendance (Albrecht, 1989).

LDS women comprised approximately 50% of the population of Goodman and Heaton's study (1986) that demonstrates that LDS members with higher education are more likely to participate in a variety of religious activities that include weekly church attendance and
saying their religious beliefs are important to them than are those with less education. Goodman and Heaton also found that LDS women are as likely as other women to enter the work force, but are more likely to work part time, and women with children at home participate at much lower rates. They will be better educated than other U.S. women, but are equal with other women in labor force participation and occupation distribution. LDS women are less likely to be working when their husbands are high income providers and there are children in the home. The "feminization of poverty," defined thus by the growing numbers of women entering the poverty level of society, applies to LDS women as well as the rest of America.

This research investigates relationships among risk taking, media use, and concerns of a purposeful sample of LDS women.

SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

Johann Gutenberg opened the way for the development of mass communications when he developed the printing press in 1454. Over time the commoners had available to them information in a way not possible before. The debate over the power of the media to influence society started then, and has increased as technology has expanded to include today's array of mass media. Mass society has been defined by Lowery and De Fleur in a popular college textbook, *Milestones in Mass Communication Research* (1989), as not only referring to large numbers.

Many so-called mass societies happen to have large populations. However, the underlying features that distinguish this type of society from other forms (e.g., traditional society) have to do with the relationships between their members rather than the size of their populations. ...(It) emerged from a century and a half of theoretical analyses by a number of pioneer social scientists (and) remains important in the public’s beliefs about the power and influence of the media (p. 4).
Media and Social Change

The concept of mass society emerged from the study of fundamental social changes that took place in society over the last two centuries. Prior to the industrial revolution, society changed slowly. Rooted to the land, agriculture was the primary occupation of most of the world. Family and kinship, loyalties to local rulers, deeply held beliefs, customs, and traditions were the ties that connected social organization. Along with industrialization, urbanization (the process by which an increasing proportion of the population in an certain area live in towns or cities), and modernization (the increased consumption of goods, use of print, film, and broadcast media) created a modern society dependent upon media (Lowery, et al., 1989). Lowery and De Fleur (1989) state:

[Modern society's] populations make use of the media for achieving a great many goals that are handled differently in the traditional society. The media provide information critical to economic, political, religious, and educational decisions in ways that are totally different from preindustrial societies. This flow of information further breaks people away from traditional ways of life and thrusts them into constantly changing ways of thinking about family obligations, sexual mores, basic values and other central features of human existence (p. 10).

Social scientists, beginning with the 1930's Payne Fund studies and continuing with present federal government reports on television, mass communication, and the socialization of children, have argued how powerful the media are when it comes to influencing our daily behaviors in negative ways. Conversely, they also find it necessary to consider how powerful the media truly are when government wants to use the media to promote the public interest and advance the social good.

Newspapers are given credit for being the first mass communication medium. They gave printed information to the mass audience (newly created by industrialization, urbanization
and modernization). Magazines followed as a means to communicate to mass audiences. With the advances of the personal computer, there is a specialized magazine for many unique portions of the mass audience, focusing on special interest groups. Film, while relatively new, is a medium of entertainment and social comment. From the 1950s, television greatly infringed on film and attendance at movie theaters. The masses stayed in their homes to be entertained by television programming. Broadcasters increased the programming day, the length of news broadcasts and changed advertising norms by utilizing television's ability to enter a home. The advent of the video cassette recorder (VCR) makes television and film a peculiar form of mass communication. VCRs, remote control devices and cable networks have combined to changed television's impact on a mass audience. Theorists argue how all of this technology impacts the individual, with the pendulum swinging between powerful media effects and weak ones.

**An Active Media Audience**

The magic bullet theory of media effects maintained that the media messages presented to the mass audience were perceived more or less uniformly (uniform effects). Theorists such as Lasswell (1927) argued that these messages are stimuli that influence the individual's emotions and feelings. This stimulation leads to a uniform response that creates changes in thought and action like those in other people. Therefore, since traditional values have been weakened by mass society, and customs and traditions no longer hold a powerful place in the person's life, the effects of mass communications are powerful, uniform and direct. An example of this misconceived theory is the way newspapers reported World War I. The enemy was presented as immoral and brutal. The audience was supposedly convinced the opposing side were monsters to be eliminated. The media today are not considered to have this kind of powerful propaganda sway. People, it was decided, are not the passive participants the magic bullet theory assumed, but are active receivers of information. The more recent extension of this theory allowed the way the U. S. Government to control the information flow to the public about the Gulf War (McCauley, 1992). The military was allowed to manipulate the video
pictures released to the public as well as the print stories. Previously held “truths” about Iraqi soldiers’ atrocities, which helped in uniting the congress and further fueled President Bush’s support of going to war to help the Kuwaitis, were called into question later by the media free to investigate what was behind the controlled information leaks. These investigations provided no proof of allegations previously held as truth and used to sway public opinion. Once this side of the story was out, the public reacted differently to the war. Other theories have been developed since the early half of this century that fit reality better, but the magic bullet theory provided a beginning place for modern mass communication research.

Environmental influences upon an individual and the subsequent responses of that individual to mass media began to interest researchers. The theory of selective influence was developed, based upon individual differences. While mass media present messages, the messages are received and interpreted selectively by the differing members of mass society. The selection process, influenced by the individual’s habits of how he/she perceives input stimuli, occurs because of each individual’s particular internal organization of beliefs, attitudes, values, needs, and ways each experiences fulfillment acquired through learning. Since perception is selective, interpreting, retaining and responding to a media message becomes selective and variable as well. When Cantril (1940) presented his findings on the effects of the radio program, War of the Worlds, he put forward the argument that the effects of mass media are not uniform, powerful, nor direct. Mass media influence depends upon the distinctive psychological differences of the audience. When viewed from this perspective, it follows that a formula could be developed to push the "right" buttons of an audience to influence the audiences choices. Mass media could help the audience think in certain ways. In reality, this was still a strong media effects approach to the influences of mass media upon the unsuspecting and vulnerable public. Uncertain how environmental influences effected the message, mass communicators set about to discover how to work within supposed environmental influences and develop ways in which the public could be swayed.
From Mass Audience to Individual Media Users

Around the time the theory of selective influence was becoming widely accepted, another theory was being developed that incorporated another form of selective influence—social categories. Hence, the poor and rich, the young and old, males and females, truck driver, farmer, computer programmer, or salesperson all are categories within mass society that behave similarly within their own category. So, mass media put out their message. Depending on the location of the individual in a differentiated social structure (composed of categories such as age, sex, education, income, and occupation) the message will be received and interpreted, shaped, and limited, by the factors that define the different social structure categories. Recognizing that mass audiences were not simply isolated individuals, nor simply tied to social categories, Lazarsfeld cultivated the idea that social relationships had a profound influence on mass media's influence upon an audience. First with Berelson and Gaudet in the "People's Choice" study (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948), Lazarsfeld looked at political propaganda and developed the "two-step flow of communication" to explain the discovery that certain people served as "opinion leaders" (p. 151). These opinion leaders were highly exposed to the media and were looked to for advice by those with less exposure.

Later Katz and Lazarsfeld (1956) studied how family, friends, acquaintances and others influence how mass media are selected and attended to, reflecting the networks of social ties each individual has. Media then are perceived to be neither uniform, powerful, nor direct, but specifically linked to and limited by the social interaction the person maintains in his/her life. The theory of selectivity based on social relationships shows that those who attend to the media heavily can influence those who attend very little. Lazarsfeld and Katz found that position in the "life cycle" was key in determining who influenced whom. Opinion leaders, created by the social category that predisposes them to collect information about their role, is sought after for information. The organizational nature of mass society is constantly changing as trends continue to shift. The close of this century has enlarged the perspective of what constitutes a mass society and who are considered opinion leaders.
**Limited Media Influence**

As theories of mass communication developed, a shortcoming in the existing theories became apparent. The results of mass communication research lead to the conclusions that mass media had only limited influence on an audience. The powerful effects originally feared at the beginning of this century were not substantiated in research findings. After World War II, research on long-range effects as well as indirect influences was possible largely due to formulations that grew out of psychology and sociology.

Schramm, Lyle and, Parker (1961) enlarged the modeling theory of mass media. Blumler and Katz (1974) further developed this model under the uses and gratifications theory. According to those subscribing to uses and gratification theory, an individual in a mass audience perceives a form of behavior that the media is describing and/or portraying, judges the behavior to be attractive and potentially useful to them as a way to cope with an actual personal situation. This person then starts using the behavior, and if the behavior is useful finds himself or herself rewarded. It takes some time, but as the behavior is used repeatedly by the individual, that behavior becomes the person's habitual way of dealing with the any subsequent situation encountered that is similar to the situation and behavior presented by the media. The behavior is discontinued only when it no longer proves useful.

**Cultural Influence and the Media**

Gerbner (1969) developed cultivation theory to explain the interaction between mass media and the public. Beginning in the late 1960s, Gerbner has focused upon television and the violence it portrays and what impact that influence is having upon society. Cultivation theory says that the symbolic world of the media cultivates the audience's view of the real world, perhaps strengthening predispositions, or creating them (Gerbner, 1988).

Noelle-Neumann (1984) developed the spiral of silence theory, which states that the individual will usually conform to what society dictates as the norm. Speaking out against the socialized way of things is discouraged automatically by society's social censure.
phenomenon appears to operate regardless of the obtrusiveness of an issue, especially if there
is any lacking of certitude of position on the part of the individual. Adaptations from theories
revolving around symbolic interaction and the influence of language on behavior also
contributed to communication theory as sociology and anthropology developed and
communication theorists utilized the findings from these disciplines.

Anthropology contributed the idea that language used by particular people had a
profound influence upon the manner people used to perceive, experience, and act upon the
social and physical worlds the people knew. Because language is a system of labels for
different aspects of reality, it follows that the way that reality is experienced largely depends
upon the way cultural conventions are established for meaning and then used. In a very large
part, our personal meanings come to us through our participation in our language community.
The process of communicating involves learning the labels and associated meanings for
everything that requires our coping mechanisms. It was joked in the late 1970s that one had to
view *Star Wars* to participate in conversations intelligently. How else could one know the
meaning of "the Force", or who OB1-Kanobe was? As we enter the 21st Century, our culture
includes countless terms and references ("Make my day," "It's the real thing," Ninja Turtles,
Big Bird, MTV, Rap, etc.) emerged from media.

Meanings shape an individual's behavior toward different aspects of the social and
physical order of the individual's world labeled by the words the individual uses. Thus, what
an individual distinguishes in a situation described in the media, is labeled by some
standardized symbol or symbols from shared language. The media context links the label and
the portrayed meaning and can also create new meanings, stretch the boundaries of existing
ones, substitute alternative meanings for older ones, and stabilize the language conventions
concerning the shared meanings for language symbols. This, in turn, gives media a long-term,
powerful, although indirect influence upon society.

The agenda setting function of media has been researched extensively since its
development by McCombs and Shaw in the 1970s when they conducted a study to evaluate
what the actual content of the media was, compared to what voters from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, in the 1968 Presidential Campaign viewed as important issues. McCombs (1977), based upon his and Shaw's study, subsequently reported that the media appeared to have a strong impact on what the voters viewed as major issues. Gitlin, in his 1980 remembrance of the 1960's youth movement, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*, presents a mass media able to redirect the public's opinions on how they view the different segments of society. He blames CBS News for influencing the direction of the New Left student movement itself, and for changing and directing the New Left student leaders' views of themselves and the movement. Mass media, and in Gitlin's experience the news media, set the agenda they want the public to follow.

Media can then be expected to influence how society interprets labels such as "women," "blacks," "sexual attractiveness," "poverty," and other social terms including health and environmental risks. This position supports a powerful, difficult to prove, theory of media influence over a long term. The path of communication research has evolved from the more simple assumption of the magic bullet theory to the more complex views of selective influence theories and those of long-range and indirect influences.

Contributing direction to this journey has been the shift described by Bellah and his colleagues (1985) of the correlation within the "split between public and private life...with a split between utilitarian individualism, appropriate in the economic and occupational spheres, and expressive individualism, appropriate in private life" (pp. 45, 46). How a mass communicator can integrate the two is one of the challenges that influences how the message is designed to meet a specific audience.

**PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON HEALTH RISK-TAKING ATTITUDES**

How a predisposition toward risk taking can be influenced by mass media messages has been the focus of numerous communication studies. Weinstein and Sandman (1993)
focused study on evaluating communications designed to explain the magnitude of a risk. They use seven criteria:

1. **comprehension**--does the audience understand the content of the communication?

2. **agreement**--does the audience agree with any recommendations/interpretations made?

3. **dose-response consistency**--do people facing a higher dose of a hazard perceive the risk as greater, thus exhibiting a greater readiness to take action than those exposed to a lower dose of this hazard?

4. **hazard-response consistency**--do people facing a hazard that is higher in risk perceive the risk as greater, thus showing a greater readiness to take action than those exposed to a hazard that is lower in risk?

5. **uniformity**--do those with the same level of exposure to a risk have the same responses to the risk?

6. **audience evaluation**--is it judged by the audience as helpful, accurate, understandable?

7. **types of communication failures**--when failures occur, are they an acceptable variety?

Others have looked at the political ramifications of risk communication (Laird, 1989). Understanding which political context gives rise to the public's opposition to a noxious facility, such as a hazardous waste treatment plant, can provide the key for a mass communicator to overcoming the local opposition to such a facility, and is the hope of frustrated government officials, and their industrial and academic counterparts. Risk communication is viewed as a way to motivate public acquiescence. Within this context, risk communications must avoid the appearance of manipulation to achieve public approval of the risk. For this reason, it is valuable to consider to whom the information is directed and for what purpose it is being directed to them (Laird, 1989).
The Florida Research Program

A research program, begun in 1988 in Florida, involved eight separate studies designed to determine risk-taking predisposition factors derived from earlier work conducted by Zuckerman (1971), Zuckerman, Bone, Neary, Mangelsdorff, and Brustman (1972), the Eysencks (1958, 1977, 1978) and others. Also studied were the relationship of risk-taking behaviors to other variables perhaps useful to the communicator such as health locus of control, health attitude conviction, need for cognition, media habits, and demographics (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1989). A risk is defined by Valenti and Ferguson (1991) as:

a perception of some likelihood of negative consequences, which can include the loss of a potential reward as well as a punishment. A risk-taking predisposition occurs when individuals are not risk averse but, in fact, like risk taking. Risk taking is a general tendency to engage in behaviors the actor understands have the likelihood of punishment or loss of reward, or other negative consequences. A risk-taking predisposition is not necessarily equated with risk seeking; seeking of risk implies that it is the risk itself which is the end or motive rather than such things as the arousal associated with the risk, the perceived likelihood that the risk will result in a reward or the social approval which might be received from those who give attention to the risk taker (p. 196).

Risk-Taking Predispositions

To better understand the problem posed to those communicating with risk takers, and to recommend a solution to the communicators, Ferguson and Valenti initially identified five different types of risk-taking predispositions: adventurous, impulsive, rebellious, physical, and unconventional (Ferguson & Valenti, 1991).

Adventurous Risk Taking. Those scoring high in adventurous risk taking were found to be mostly young, single, males, who never or only occasionally attend church. Driving fast
is associated with high adventurousness. A positive correlation exists between adventurous risk taking and good health attitudes, with a feeling of control over one’s health, and with strong health values. These risk takers like to think, have high exposure to radio, and find confidence in their personal physician or the EPA as sources of health information. They most likely have been rewarded for exploratory behavior (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991).

**Impulsive Risk Taking.** Young, single, female, or smokers represented those who scored high on impulsiveness. They also speed while driving. This group scored low on cognitive involvement with health, have negative feelings about health, do not feel in control of their health, and have little concern about their health. A dislike of thinking is associated with impulsiveness. Valenti and Ferguson suspect this risk taker is taking risks more for the sensations derived from the risk than from having learned to expect rewards from the results of the behavior. Taking the risk becomes the end in itself (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991).

**Rebellious Risk Taking.** Young, single, or male scored high on rebelliousness. They also speed, smoke, or used to smoke. Those who are Catholic or Jewish but attend church or synagogue only occasionally score high on rebelliousness. This risk-taking predisposition has a high reliance on radio and has high radio use, but has a low reliance on all media for health information. Valenti and Ferguson view this risk taker as reacting to others—being known as a "risk taker" is most likely one of the rewards associated with this behavior (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991).

**Physical Risk Taking.** Again, a young, single, male tends to display high physical risk-taking tendencies. High or low incomes, but not mid-range income, is associated with physical risk taking. Church attendance is occasional or never, and physical risk takers speed on the highway. This predisposition has good feelings about health, strong commitment to one’s own health beliefs, and concern about health. There is an association with low television exposure, but high radio reliance. This risk taker will believe the EPA, American Cancer Society, the AMA, the Surgeon General, or a government scientist. A physical risk taker responds to the risky behavior itself and the associated sensation (Ferguson, Valenti, &
Unconventional Risk Taking. Scoring high in unconventional risk taking are the young, the single, or males. These risk takers never go to church, are Protestant, or non religious. The unconventional risk taker does not care about their health, does not have strong feelings about their health, and does not have confidence in the Surgeon General. There is little use of television or newspapers for health information. Valenti and Ferguson believe this risk taker is motivated by the attention received from others for taking the risk, not for the sensation associated with the risk (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991).

The Ferguson-Valenti constructs were validated. Risk communicators were alerted to communication strategies for developing risk messages, as well as which medium might best ensure the target population’s attention to the risk message. Valenti (1994) continues with research designed to begin answering how "discussion and attitudes of acceptance or rejection of an idea; (how) framing often determines the likeliness of an audience to act on the issue presented. What an audience brings to a media experience or message--audience schemas--contributes to their news interpretation" (p. 1). How the medium and messenger are influenced by risk-taking attitudes about health and the environment has become an important focus of research.

Risk-Taking Society

Understanding information presented provides a sense of control over one’s fate (Pollock, 1993). Extensive work has been done among the diverse population of Florida by Ferguson and Valenti to identify and understand risk takers and how their attitudes toward risk taking impacts responses. Ferguson and Valenti have been concerned with learning how mass media can better or more effectively present messages to a population of risk takers. What will allow improved communication with risk takers to make sure they receive information necessary to make informed risky choices (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1989)? Studying a group of women risk takers to better understand the different influences that guide how a
woman predisposed to risky health or environmental choices will behave when confronted with a health or environmental risk becomes part of the necessary procedure in developing an effective communication design.

Ossana, Helms and Leonard (1992) studied a four-stage model of womanist identity which concludes that a highly developed identity enhances one’s self esteem. The more a woman has an individualized identity and has come to terms with that identity, the more positive her sense of self. Hall (1990), pointing to modern industrialized countries and the increasing amounts of time and energy available to women for self-reflection, recognizes "(w)hen women have time to think and reflect about themselves and the world, they can develop a sense of who they are and cultivate this conscious identity. Women's education leads to fuller understanding, facilitating intellectual growth....Education is one of the most significant means of women's entry into the public sphere" (p.2).

"Women have hierarchies of values that differ from those of men....Identity results from choice....Identity is our closest personal link with social values" (Hall, 1990, p.14). Hornig (1992) found that women perceive more risk and less benefit than do men when confronted with mock news stories about new developments in science and technology and possible social aspects of the development. Research by Ferguson and Valenti points to the high number of women among the most difficult to reach type of risk taker. Women are more likely to be high in impulsive risk taking than men, and the impulsive risk taker appears to be the most difficult to communicate with effectively. Ferguson and Valenti found that the impulsive risk taker processes information heuristically (Ferguson & Valenti, 1991). Ferguson and Valenti (1990) find that "Impulsive risk takers don't like to think about their health or about health generally and they have negative feelings about their health. They don't feel in control; they get depressed about their health, and believe that illness is out of their control. These risk takers do not like to think; they have a low need for cognition and try to avoid thinking situations" (p. 11). Does a Mormon woman find health issues important and is she likely to listen to messages about her health?
The conclusion reached by Ferraro and Albrecht-Jenssen (1991) is that there is overall a positive link between religiosity and better health. Active participation in one’s religion results in better health. Other researchers have also found religiosity positively associated with wellness and inversely associated with a number of health-compromising behaviors and illnesses (Oleckno & Blacconiere, 1991).

While some may question why anyone would take risks with their health, others have organized or are joining the many support groups to facilitate the risk taker in his/her risk taking—scuba diving, sky diving or other physically demanding activities’ ranks are increasing consistently. Ferguson and Valenti questioned whether the person attracted to risk taking might not also be the kind of person who fails to get regular medical checkups, or ignores warnings to engage in “safe sex.” When information is ignored, risky sexual practices are continued despite repeated warnings; others become involved in the risk taking second hand. Marketing researchers are returning to fear appeal to get their messages to the at-risk public, but question its effectiveness in actually influencing a change in behaviors (Tanner, Hunt, & Eppright, 1991). Current headlines designed to frighten risk takers into healthy behaviors can be found across the country. *Private Eye WEEKLY: Utah’s Independent Newspaper* in the September 15, 1993 issue front-paged the story: "Hear, Speak, and See NO DANGER: AIDS, Young people in Utah are hiding from the facts, and still having sex.” Especially in the population under evaluation in this study, religious/moral implications cloud how messages are received by at-risk groups. There is an attitude that these risky behaviors do not exist in this population (Quick, 1993). Yet if they do exist, and the averages can be followed, over 20% of sexually active unmarried women use no birth control at all putting them at extreme danger for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991).

Recently the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) completed a study (de la Garza, DeSipio, Garcia, Garcia, & Falcon, 1992) to examine health communications with Americans of lower socioeconomic status (SES). The researchers feel the term "hard-to-reach" is a misnomer. People receive the information; they do not act because
the information is not deemed personally relevant. ODPHP conducted 24 focus groups (200 SES adults) involving white, black and Hispanic men and women. These participants were 25-64 years of age with high school diplomas or less, and an income between the median and poverty.

The participants ranked health as important, but allowed distractions; i.e., lack of time, money, family, environmental support, willpower, and laziness to keep them from changing to a healthy lifestyle. There was no recognition that overweight equaled poor health, even though half of them considered themselves to be overweight. The participants favored a positive approach to information about health, rather than a chart that produced a guilt trip. The groups believed heredity and fate were major reasons for their present health status and any chronic condition that might develop. The ODPHP gave several tips on how to communicate with these people: acknowledge the role of heredity in disease; be sensitive to strong religious beliefs (realize beliefs may contribute to a sense that chronic disease is beyond personal control); provide practical, personalized instructions; stress importance of health screenings; recognize limits of radio and TV; target print messages; and work with local support systems (Auld, 1992). Fergusson and Valenti’s work is aimed at similar people—those predisposed to risk taking when it comes to choices involving their health and the environment.

With the seeming large amounts of information presented by the mass media about health and environmental risks, risky behaviors continue to grow in the population. The question of how effective the media are at informing their publics again comes forward. Stout (1993) recently presented a paper at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), based upon his non-published dissertation, supporting the view that LDS women use media in diverse ways. Stout also found LDS women are not as easily stereotyped in their preferences for media as previously supposed. Stout identified three types of television audiences among the LDS women he surveyed. Stout first describes Traditions as young, affluent, and highly religious. Traditions view television as a distraction from more important activities identified by their religious institution. Second,
Stout labels the **Independent** as less religious, older, and less affluent than **Traditionals**. **Independents** view the value of television from a more personal, private point of view instead of an institutional one. The third group Stout identifies are called **Contextuals**. **Contextuals** are highly religious, but unlike the **Traditionals** watch a wide variety of entertainment programs and incur guilt feelings doing so. Stout determined that although church leaders present a strong media effects model of television, LDS women themselves, are varied in how they define television's role in their lives. Stout's work illustrates a level of diversity among Mormon women and their media habits and dependency on media that suggests a need to view these women in less collective ways. While the religious culture does contribute to guilt of consumption of the medium in some instances, the cultural dictates do not appear to overcome the individual's needs, biases, or predispositions.

Based upon Ferguson and Valenti's previous work with identifying audiences predisposed to taking risks with their health and environment that identified a common attribute of low religiosity among risk takers, this research will look at risk predisposition among a group of Mormon women to determine if there are risk averters among them. It will also seek to learn if they are risk takers, the predominate type of risk-taking predisposition. Can a majority of risk takers be found among a predominately religious group?

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This study looks at a population of LDS women and asks: 1.) Are Mormon women predisposed to risk taking? 2.) How can those who want to communicate to an audience of Mormon women most effectively reach the risk takers among them?

The four hypotheses to be tested are:

**H₁**: Mormon women are more likely to be risk avoidant than predisposed to risk taking. This is based upon previous research that concludes religiosity is one behavior that can preclude risk taking. Ferguson and Valenti noted the highest scores for risk taking were found among those who no longer attended church, or did not attend regularly.
**H2:** Among Mormon women, those who are risk takers are more likely to be predisposed to impulsive risk taking than to rebellious or adventurous risk taking. Ferguson and Valenti's research has identified that women are more likely to be high in this risk-taking predisposition than men. LDS women are the subject of this study because of the researchers interest in religious affiliation and risk taking and the convenience of the sample.

**H3:** Mormon women who are predisposed to impulsive risk taking are likely also to be lower media users than those who are rebellious or adventurous risk takers or are risk averters. This again is based upon the Valenti-Ferguson construct of impulsive risk-taking predisposition which shows lower media use for impulsive risk takers.

**H4:** Mormon women are more likely to be concerned with issues threatening their religious values than with risks to their health or the environment.

Recommendations will be developed for strategies to improve effective communication to Mormon women, especially those who are predisposed to risk taking, about environmental and health risks.
CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

The primary method of data collection selected for this thesis research is survey research, using a self-administered questionnaire. Survey research is used for a variety of purposes by social scientists. Some primary uses according to Fowler are: "the measurement of public opinion for newspaper and magazine articles, the measurement of political perceptions and opinions to help political candidates with their elections, and market research designed to understand better consumer preferences and interests" (1988, p. 10). Fowler states that it is "common to find that only a special-purpose survey can provide a needed estimate of how things are in a population" (p.11). One main reason for using survey research is to collect information available from no other source. Fink and Kosecoff (1985) define a survey as "a method of collecting information directly from people about their feelings, motivations, plans, beliefs, and personal, educational, and financial background. It usually takes the form of a questionnaire that someone fills out alone or with assistance, or it can be conducted as an interview in person or on the telephone" (p.13). In addition they cite three "good reasons for conducting surveys: A policy needs to be set or a program must be planned. ...You want to evaluate the effectiveness of programs to change people's knowledge, attitudes, health, or welfare. ...You are a researcher and a survey is used to assist you" (p. 14).

Surveys are most effective when the information needed must come directly from people--the studied population, not from other sources such as eye witness accounts, observations, performance tests, written tests, or record reviews, which are additional ways to collect information for research. The design of the survey is an important element in ensuring the information sought can be obtained with the least amount of bias. The researcher must consider the population to be studied in the design; the types of analysis the data will undergo; and when the survey will take place, it is once (cross-sectional), or overtime (longitudinal)
There are a number of advantages to the survey researcher selecting the self-administered instrument approach. Cost is a consideration in choosing to use self-administered questionnaires; it is less expensive than personal interviews. Self-administered questionnaires also allow for more complex questions and allow the researcher to ask a battery of similar questions. When answering a self-administered questionnaire, the respondent does not have to share his or her answer with an interviewer. For the purposes of this study, a self-administered questionnaire presented to individuals attending scheduled conferences provided the least cost, the advantage of anonymous responses, and the ability to ask complex risk questions.

**Subjects**

The population was drawn from among participants attending two conferences held in Utah in April, 1993. Both conferences were assumed to attract large percentages of LDS women given the nature and subject matter of each conference.

The first conference was titled "Spaces and Silences: An Enhanced Women's Conference," and took place in Salt Lake City, Utah, on April 28, 1993, at the University Park Hotel. The one day conference program was promoted in the flier as an opportunity to "explore the issues of space and silence in our personal lives, in our relationships, and in our institutional affiliations." (See Appendix A.) During a personal communication between the author and one of the conference organizers, Lavina Fielding Anderson, Anderson indicated that there was no formal sanction from the LDS Church for this conference. Anderson explained further that the organizers of this conference considered a need to examine what they felt were developments by LDS Church leaders to thwart public discussions of personal questioning of doctrines of the LDS Church, personal interpretation of those doctrines, and interaction with others seeking to understand difficult doctrinal points. It was considered probable by the researcher that this conference could provide a diverse sample of LDS women
from the second conference that would also be used to select respondents.

The second group of participants was drawn from "The Brigham Young University Women's Conference." This two-day conference is co-sponsored annually by the Relief Society (the women's organization of the LDS Church) and by Brigham Young University. The conference was held on the campus of Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, on April 29-30, 1993. The program of this conference addresses issues of concern to Mormon women and provides advice and solutions within an orthodox, doctrinal parameter.

These two conferences are specifically aimed at LDS women and were determined to be appropriate opportunities to capture a sample reflecting the general population of women who belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. While both conferences explored issues the respective organizers considered to be of concern to the present-day LDS woman, the BYU Women's Conference can be considered the organ used to present the LDS Church's position on controversial matters. It is argued by the organizers of the Spaces and Silences Conference that controversial matters are either ignored, denied, or dealt with in a manner not transferable to everyday life at the yearly BYU Conference. The Spaces and Silences Conference was developed as an alternative or supplement to the larger two-day campus based conference. It was hoped soliciting participants from each of these conferences would capture whatever diversity that may exist within the LDS women population.

The Questionnaire

The survey instrument (see Appendix B) consisted of three sections: media use, risk-taking attitudes, and demographics. Valenti, the principle investigator in this Utah research program, adapted a questionnaire for this study from that developed by Ferguson and Valenti in the Florida program. The questionnaire includes questions designed and validated to identify risk-taking predispositions. Since doctrines of the LDS church strongly discourage alcohol, drug, and tobacco use it was felt that questions related to these items would bias responses. Alternate questions were developed under the direction of the principal investigator.
for items deemed sensitive to the sampled population.

The instrument and research plan had been submitted to the Human Subjects Review Committee at Brigham Young University, and met with the committee's approval. After pretesting, a cover letter was attached to the questionnaire to explain that the survey was for ongoing research about the media and health. A sample question was provided, and instructions were written out to show how to appropriately respond using the scales provided with each question or statement. Respondents were encouraged to detach and keep the cover letter for future information or contact with the principle investigator.

**Part I: Media Use**

Media use questions measured the viewing, reading, and listening habits and preferences of each participant with regard to television, newspapers, magazines, and radio. Number of days the respondent used each type of medium per week was the first question in each category. A Likert scale with anchors of "0" and "7" was provided for respondents to circle the number of days in a week the medium was used.

Open-ended responses were solicited to determine favorite television programming, favorite newspapers, magazines, and radio programming. In order to gauge respondents' feelings when not able to experience their choice of program/reading material, a 7-point Likert scale was again utilized. Anchors of the scales were: (1) I wouldn't miss it at all, and (7) I would miss it very much. In a probe question, the respondent was also asked to name her next favorite program/reading material, and to rate how she would feel if unable to participate in that program/reading material.

Frequencies were run on the open-ended questions to identify preferences in the respondent's choices of favorite programming and reading material, and her degree of dependency on the media. A media use index was then created by collapsing the Likert scale into three points: low, medium or high, and forcing the responses into one of the three new categories.
**Part II: Risk-taking Predispositions**

Thirty statements developed by Ferguson and Valenti were used to evaluate types of risk-taking predispositions (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1989; Ferguson, & Valenti, 1990; Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991). A 7-point Likert scale, following each statement, measured how like or unlike the 30 statements each respondent felt she was, with (1) Not at all like me, and (7) Very much like me, being the anchors of the scale. Designed to determine the type of risk-taking predisposition, Ferguson and Valenti used validated studies of sensation seeking by Zuckerman and the Eysencks (Eysenck, 1958; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1978; Zuckerman, 1971), and original items. Earlier risk measures studied: Thrill and Adventure Seeking, seeking sensation through physically risky activities; Experience Seeking, seeking sensation through a non-conforming lifestyle; Disinhibition, seeking sensation through social stimulation; and Boredom Susceptibility, having an aversion to boredom that is manifest in great restlessness when things remain the same for any length of time (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1989).

The Ferguson and Valenti validated risk-taking behavior factors are consistent with the Eysencks' two-factor theory of personality, extraversion and neuroticism. The Eysencks (1977) originally identified four subfactors. They are first, Impulsivity in the Narrow Sense—which includes the items: a) Do you often buy things on impulse? b) Do you generally do and say things without stopping to think? c) Are you an impulsive person? Second is Risk taking—which includes the questions: a) Do you quite enjoy taking risks? b) Would life with no danger in it be too dull for you? c) Would you do almost anything for a dare? Third is Nonplanning—which includes: a) Do you like planning things carefully ahead of time? b) When buying things, do you usually bother about the guarantee? c) When you go on a trip, do you like to plan routes and timetables carefully? Fourth is Liveliness and includes the questions: a) do you usually make up your mind quickly? b) Do you prefer to "sleep on it" before making decisions? The 12 items used to measure Impulsiveness in this study are: 1) I often speak before thinking things out; 2) I usually think carefully before doing anything; 3)
I'm guided mostly by my feelings; 4) I consider all the advantages and disadvantages before making up my mind; 5) I often get into a jam because I do things without thinking; 6) I find that I often buy a new item or product on impulse; 7) Others say I'm one of a kind; 8) I'm impulsive; 9) I try hard to be very neat and organized; 10) Even as a kid, I was always doing things without thinking about the result; 11) I generally do and say things without stopping to think; 12) I often get so "carried away" by new and exciting things that I never think of possible snags.

Sensitivity to LDS values lead the principle researcher to alter some of the original, validated questions used to measure rebellious risk taking. The following questions, which measured rebellious risk-taking predisposition, were removed and these substitutes inserted: "I feel better after taking a few drinks" was replaced with "I am an aggressive risk taker."

"Keeping the drinks full is the key to a good party" was replaced with "I believe nothing ventured, nothing gained." These and six original items are used to measure rebellious risk-taking predisposition: 1) I am an aggressive risk taker; 2) I believe nothing ventured, nothing gained; 3) I enjoy the company of real partiers; 4) I don't like rules; 5) I like wild and uninhibited parties; 6) For me being different is important; 7) I don't like being told what to do or how to do it; 8) I don't like having a boss.

Adventurous risk taking is measured by ten statements as follows: 1) I welcome new and exciting experiences and sensations, even if they are a little frightening and unconventional; 2) I'm an adventurous person; 3) I quite enjoy taking risks; 4) I was always getting into everything when I was a toddler; 5) I like new ideas, places and people; 6) To broaden my horizons I'm willing to take some risks; 7) I like it when others see me as daring and adventurous; 8) I don't like to travel; 9) I like doing some risky things, especially when I can do them with other people; 10) I sometimes like doing things that are a bit frightening.

These 30 items are submitted to factor analysis and varimax rotation, as was earlier research to establish the validity of the measures (Ferguson, & Valenti, 1990). Any item with an eigenvalue over 1 is considered a factor. The 30 measures are loaded across those factors.
The rotation ensures the factors are evenly distributed and do not arbitrarily load on the first factor. A scree plot is employed to further clarify the factor loadings and assist in determining the factors that are significant. Cronbach's alpha verifies the reliability of the risk-taking measures.

**Part III: Demographics and Risky Behaviors**

The final section of the instrument measures demographic information. Respondents are asked their age, if any children under 18 years of age live in the home, how much formal education they have completed, their race, their primary occupation, and their total household income for 1992. They are asked to report their religion, how often they attend church, and how they describe themselves politically in one item each.

They are also asked to identify which concerns them the most; health issues, the environment, the economy, or other social issues. Respondents were further asked whether they belong to any environmental, social activist, or political group. Risky behaviors and levels of concern about the environment and health are also measured, but for the purposes of this thesis, these items are not analyzed as intended. Frequencies were run on each item and index.

**Survey Administration**

Prior to arriving at the two conferences, the graduate student pre-numbered surveys to allow for differentiation between the two conferences. Survey instruments used at the Spaces and Silences Conference were coded with an alpha designator of "A," followed by a three digit number beginning with the number 001 (i.e., A001, A002, etc.). Survey instruments used for the Women's Conference at Brigham Young University were coded with a designator of "B," followed by a three digit number beginning with the number 001 (i.e., B001, B002, etc.). The number coding ensured anonymity to those who agreed to participate and provided the opportunity to differentiate between the two conferences' respondents for future evaluation and
comparison purposes.

At the Spaces and Silences Conference a table was placed across from the registration table. A sign was placed to the side of the table identifying Brigham Young University Communication Study. Clipboards held a survey instrument and a pencil. As the women passed near this table, this researcher, another female graduate student, and Dr. Valenti approached the conference attendees and invited them to participate in the research project by filling out a survey. It was first verified that the woman was a conference participant. Each respondent was told the survey would take approximately ten minutes to complete. Chairs for added comfort were provided near the table for the women's use.

As the respondents completed the survey, the administrator stayed nearby to assure the guidelines expressed on the survey were observed, and to take the first two sections to score a modified list of risk-taking measures as the respondent continued with the third section containing the demographics. The scoring of the abbreviated risk-taking measures provided an immediate determination of whether or not the participant was predisposed to taking risks or risk averse, and identified the dominant type of risk-taking predisposition. The administrator asked each woman who participated in the survey, especially those scoring high on one of the measured risk-taking types, whether she would be willing to participate in a further portion of the study to be conducted at a later date, and if so, the respondent's name and telephone number were recorded on a sheet separate from the completed questionnaire for potential future contact.

The same procedures were followed for the Women's Conference at Brigham Young University. A table was placed in a step-down lounge area and the sign was placed beside the table. Several chairs were placed around the table, and the built-in benches surrounding the lounge were utilized as well. Surveys were collected both days of the BYU Conference.

**Coding and Analysis Procedure**

Prior to entering each instrument into the SPSS for Windows statistical program for
analysis, open-ended responses relevant to this thesis were precoded with a numeric designator. This researcher assigned the number to the response in the order the response was given, e.g., if in the first instrument examined the respondent had "News" as her favorite television program, a number "1" was entered into the codebook and "News" became the first value under the variable "Favorite television program." Thereafter, each response of "News" was assigned the numeric "1" for data input purposes. Each question or statement on the instrument was assigned a variable name. In all but the "Year Born" variable a value label was also defined. SPSS for windows allowed the column width to be defined which helped identify a mis-entered number. After the instruments were entered into SPSS for Windows, they were saved as an Excel file and were then printed from the Excel program which allowed a spreadsheet printout for data cleaning. After data cleaning, frequencies were run on the entire data set. The results from the frequencies helped categorize the collapsing of the open-ended questions into more manageable groups for analysis.

Favorite television programs were collapsed into categories including drama (e.g., LA Law, Knots Landing), sitcoms (e.g., Murphy Brown, Home Improvement, M*A*S*H), talk shows (Oprah Winfrey, Letterman, The Tonight Show), news (including the morning shows, 60 Minutes, CNN, and local news), adventure (Star Trek and Deep Space Nine), TV movies (specifically made for television, Sunday Night at the Movies, American Movie Classics), PBS (e.g., Mystery, Nature, Great Performances), cable (e.g., MTV, Nickelodeon, Discover Channel), game shows (e.g., Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune), reality (e.g., Rescue 911, America's Funniest Home Videos), daytime soaps (e.g., The Young and the Restless, The Guiding Light), sports, religious, no preference, and other (which includes anything that did not easily fit into the other categories).

Favorite radio programming was collapsed into easy listening (e.g., Michael Bolton, Barbara Streisand), classical (e.g., Mozart), talk/news (e.g., Rush Limbaugh, CNN), contemporary (top 40, KISN), oldies (e.g., 50's, 60's, and 70's classic rock), PBS (e.g., National Public Radio, Morning Edition), Country/Western (e.g., KSOP, KKAT), Modern
Rock (e.g., X 96, rap music), jazz/New Age (e.g., The Breeze, R & B), no preference, and other.

Favorite newspapers were collapsed into those along the Wasatch Front (e.g., The Salt Lake Tribune, The Deseret News, The Ogden Standard Examiner, The Daily Herald), local paper (for out of state respondent's local papers), national (e.g., USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Washington Post), student paper (e.g., The Chronicle, The Daily Universe), no preference, and other.

Favorite magazines were collapsed into the following categories: religious (e.g., The Ensign, The Friend, Guidepost), parenting (e.g., Mothering, Parents), decorator/arts (e.g., Artweek, Independent Filmmaker, Country Living, Country Woman), news/business (e.g., Time, Newsweek, Consumer Report, US News and World Report), celebrity (e.g., People, TV Guide, Sports Illustrated), food/travel (e.g., Gourmet, Smithsonian), homemaking (e.g., Women's Day, Better Homes & Gardens), regional (e.g., New Yorker, Utah Holiday), fashion (e.g., Cosmopolitan, Harper's), feminist (e.g., Working Woman, Ms), fitness (e.g., Fitness, Shape), digests/journals (e.g., Reader's Digest, American Journalism), science (Scientific American, Omni), no preference, and other. The variable labels were duplicated for the alternate to television programs, radio, magazines and newspapers so that there would be less chance for a mis-coded answer.

Also collapsed into similar groupings were the responses to primary occupation. They are: housewife (e.g., homemaker, mother), housewife + (respondent listed housewife and a profession), professional (e.g., nursing, attorney, social worker), clerical(secretarial, student, self employed/sales, retired, teaching, none, and other.

The responses to the question of whether they belonged to a group were collapsed into five categories: no, yes, environmental, political, and human rights. Concerns collapsed into eleven categories: health, environment, economy, other, don't have any, morality (includes decline of family, state of the nation and church), human rights (includes injustice, racism, sexual equality), social concerns (includes children's issues, violence, welfare of people,
education), abuse (sexual, physical and mental), all, and family (home, family, children).

The organizers of the two conferences were interested to know how the attendees heard about the conference and why they decided to attend. Questions soliciting this information were included at the end of the questionnaire. The collapsed categories for sources of conference information are: church/BYU, friend/family, mail/brochure, attended before, media (includes radio, newspaper and television), part of the conference, and other. Why they decided to attend the conferences collapsed into: interesting, convenient, a need/uplifting, friend/family/church, work/other, to network, a participant, and attended before.

Respondents were further collapsed into low, medium, and high within each category of risk-taking predisposition to aid in analysis. One-way analysis of variance is used to determine significance between the means of different risk-taking predispositions and variables such as religious commitment, age, concern, and education. Pearson’s r is used to measure correlations between the risk-taking measures and the three variables of interest in this study: religiosity, media use, and concern.
CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS

Demographics

The typical profile of the 538 LDS women (combined data into one data set) who responded to the surveys indicates a white, middle aged, married, LDS woman who regularly attends church and is in a higher income range than is the norm for the general population. (See Table 1.) The mean age of the women is 43.8 years, 81% are married, 9.6% are single, and 9.5% are divorced, widowed or other. Over 85% say they regularly attended church with 10.7% attending occasionally or frequently and only 4.2% never attending. The majority report they are LDS with no qualifier (96.2%), an additional 2% say they are LDS but included qualifiers such as "recovering," "officially and technically," and "cultural," and less than 1% (0.8%) were Catholic, Protestant or other.

The population surveyed is mostly Caucasian (95.2%); only 4.8% are Native American, African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American or other. One third have at least some college (33.3%). Almost 10% (9.6%) report an Associate degree, and 20.7% have a 4-year degree. Some graduate school or a graduate degree was reported for 25%. Some 10% (10.2%) have only their high school diploma, and 1.3% have some high school and no degree. The average household income for these women ranges from $40,000-49,000, and over one third (34.7%) report incomes over $60,000. Less than half report housewife as their primary occupation (44.8%), with 6.1% including a profession with housewife. Some 17.5% report professional occupations with 7.3% clerical/secretarial, 6.3% student, 6.7% self employed, 6.9% listing teaching, and 3.9% are retired. Less than 1% (.6 %) report none or other.
TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHICS: COMPARISON OF BYU WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AND COUNTERPOINT CONFERENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Counterpoint N=148</th>
<th>BYU N=375</th>
<th>Combined N=523</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced/Widowed/Other</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Church:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>.3%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally/Frequently</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Affiliation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDS</td>
<td>93.2%</td>
<td>99.7%</td>
<td>96.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>.3%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native/African/Asian American/Other</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>95.9%</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year Degree</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Graduate/Graduate Degree</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some High School--No Degree</td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $60,000/year</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000 to 59,999/year</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000 to 39,999/year</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20,000/year</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Occupation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>44.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife +</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/Secretarial</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employed</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/None</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Risk Taking

The thirty items that measured risk taking were analyzed with a factor analysis and varimax rotation. Eight of the eigenvalues are greater than one, but a scree plot identifies a five-factor solution. (See Figure 1.) It was anticipated that changing the risk-taking measures to accommodate the LDS women surveyed might change the factor loadings for the rebellious measure, and they did change. Instead of loading on the one intended factor, the new edited items were found across three factors, and are therefore eliminated as explained in detail later in this chapter. The questions for adventurous risk taking loaded on the first factor, and questions for the impulsive measure loaded on the second factor. Of the 30 original risk-taking items, 22 are used for this analysis. Items not loading as expected in this index are discarded. Two items from the Ferguson-Valenti measure did not load for the adventurous factor, three items did not load for impulsivity, two items did not load for rebelliousness, and one item loaded negatively in the impulsive measure. None of these eight items were used in further analysis.

The two questions from the adventurous measure that did not load are "I was always getting into everything when I was a toddler" and "I don't like to travel." The three that did not load from the impulsive measure are: "I'm guided mostly by my feelings," "Others say I'm one of a kind," and "I try hard to be very neat and organized." The impulsive-measure question that loaded negatively was "I'm impulsive." The two questions that did not load cleanly for the rebellious measure are the two substitute questions "I am an aggressive risk taker" and "I believe nothing ventured, nothing gained;" both loaded on the factor with the adventurous questions. The factor loadings are represented below in Table 2.
TABLE 2
FACTOR ANALYSIS OF RISK TAKING MEASURES
Factor Loadings

FACTOR
1 2 3 4 5

ADVENTUROUS RISK TAKING:
1. I welcome new and exciting experiences and sensations, even if they are a little frightening and unconventional. .71
2. I'm an adventurous person. .76
3. I quite enjoy taking risks. .71
4. I like new ideas, places and people. .48
5. To broaden my horizons I'm willing to take some risks. .63
6. I like it when others see me as daring and adventurous. .50
7. I like doing some risky things, especially when I can do them with other people. .42
8. I sometimes like doing things that are a bit frightening. .50

IMPULSIVE RISK TAKING:
1. I often speak before thinking things out. .66
2. I usually think carefully before doing anything. .60
3. I consider all the advantages and disadvantages before making up my mind. .50
4. I often get into a jam because I do things without thinking. .70
5. I find that I often buy a new item or product on impulse. .49
6. Even as a kid, I was always doing things without thinking about the result. .65
7. I generally do and say things without stopping to think. .82
8. I often get so "carried away" by new and exciting things that I never think of possible snags. .58

REBELLIOUS RISK TAKING:
1. I enjoy the company of real partiers. .85
2. I don't like rules. .48
3. I like wild and uninhibited parties. .70
4. For me being different is important. .80
5. I don't like being told what to do or how to do it. .75
6. I don't like having a boss. .81

The alpha reliability coefficient for the 22 measures is .84.

Risk-Taking Indices

Figures 2, 3, and 4 represent the frequency distribution, with a normal curve overlay, for the three risk-taking predisposition measures. Based upon the factor analysis, there were eight valid items that measure adventurous risk taking and eight valid items that measure impulsive risk taking. The range of possible responses to each item was: 1 ("not at all like me") to 7 ("very much like me"). A risk avertive woman responding to items measuring a
predisposition to adventurous or impulsive risk taking would respond with "not at all like me" for the eight items making up the measure and would result in a total response of eight--a "1" for each item. A high risk-taking woman would respond with "very much like me" to the eight items resulting in 56, or a "7" for each item. The rebellious measure contained six valid items according to the factor analysis. The response total of six would represent a woman risk-avertive to rebelliousness, while a response total of 48 would represent a high level of risk-taking predisposition to rebelliousness. A woman who responds with either "2" or "3" can be considered a low level of risk taking, and a woman responding "4" or "5" can be considered a moderate level of risk taking.

To create the risk index of low, medium, and high in each of the measures of risk-taking predisposition, the frequencies of each measure were examined. To reflect the least bias onto the indices, the index for each measure was decided by dividing the possible responses into thirds using the least possible response as the beginning number and the greatest possible response as the final number of the scale. The low/medium break occurred at the first third of the scale. For adventurousness and impulsiveness the break was between 23 and 24, and for rebelliousness it was between 17 and 18. The medium/high break occurred at the second third of the scale. For adventurousness and impulsiveness the break was between 39 and 40, and for rebelliousness it was between 29 and 30. A new variable, "risk index" was created for each risk-taking predisposition that has the values: 1=Low, 2=Medium, and 3= High. Low risk taking was represented by responses scoring 23 or less on the items making up adventurous or rebellious risk taking. Responses scoring 17 or less were low risk taking in the rebellious risk taking measure. In the medium risk-taking index, responses between 24 and 39 were the scores for adventurous or impulsive risk taking, and between 18 and 29 for rebelliousness. Scoring 40 or above identifies high risk taking in the adventurous and impulsive risk-taking predisposition measures and 30 or above identifies high risk taking in the rebellious predisposition measure.

Table 3 presents the levels of risk taking for each predisposition. Each conference is
considered as an individual data set and the third column is the two conferences considered as one data set.

### Table 3

**Levels of Risk Taking: Comparison of BYU Women's Conference and Counterpoint Conference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Risk Taking Predisposition</th>
<th>Counterpoint N=148</th>
<th>BYU N=375</th>
<th>Combined N=523</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adventurous Risk Taking:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impulsive Risk Taking:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>50.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rebellious Risk Taking:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Combined Data Set**

The combined data set of both conferences shows that low adventurousness was the least represented (21.4%) among those predisposed to low levels of risk taking, while high adventurousness was the most represented (24.7%) among those predisposed to high levels of risk taking. For the adventurous risk-taking predisposition, another 53.9% score moderately for the predisposition. (See Figure 5.)

Those predisposed to high levels of impulsive risk-taking score the lowest percentage, 3.3% for the combined data set. LDS women indicating low levels of impulsiveness score the highest percentages for low risk-taking, 50.2% compared to 28.1% who score low in rebelliousness and the 21.4% reported in the adventurous predisposition. For the impulsive
risk-taking predisposition, an additional 46.5% score moderately. (See Figure 6.)

Rebelliousness reports the largest percentage (64%) of women predisposed to moderate levels of risk taking. In the rebellious risk-taking predisposition, 7.9% score high levels of predisposition to rebellious risk taking, and 28.1% score low levels of rebellious risk taking. (See Figure 7.)

These respondents are most likely to be predisposed to moderate rebellious risk taking (64%), or moderate adventurous risk taking (53.9%). Just under 28% (27.9%, N=156) can be found with moderate or high predisposition levels in all of the risk-taking predispositions. Close to half of these women (42%, N=220) have moderate or high levels of predisposition in adventurous and impulsive risk taking. There are 32.4% (N=169) that can be found with a moderate or high level of predisposition to impulsive and rebellious risk taking. And over half (52.9%, N=277) are found to have moderate or high levels of predisposition to adventurous and rebellious risk taking. Again demonstrating that these measures are not exclusive.

**BYU Women's Conference**

Evaluated separately, the Brigham Young University Women's Conference respondents reveal 19.1% of the women score high levels of adventurousness, 53.4% are identified scoring a moderate level of adventurous risk-taking predisposition, and 27.5% of the women score a low level of adventurousness. (See Figure 8.) The LDS woman who scores high levels of impulsive risk-taking predisposition is 3.3%, with 45.6% reporting moderate levels of predisposition to impulsive risk taking, and 51.1% scoring low levels of impulsivity. (See Figure 9.) Women at the BYU conference score 4.6% in those predisposed to high levels of rebelliousness, 60.9% in those predisposed to medium levels of rebellious risk-taking; and 34.5% in those with low levels of rebelliousness. (See Figure 10.)

These respondents, by themselves, are most likely to be predisposed to moderate rebellious risk taking (60.9%) or moderate adventurous risk taking (53.4%).
**Counterpoint Conference**

By contrast, of the women attending the Counterpoint Conference, 16.2% indicate high levels of rebelliousness, 71.6% report moderate levels of rebelliousness, and 12.2% report low levels of rebelliousness. (See Figure 13.) These attendees also report 39.2% predisposed to high levels of adventurous risk taking, 55.2% indicate moderate levels of adventurous risk taking, and 5.6% who scored low levels of adventurousness. (See Figure 11.)

The impulsive risk-taking index reveals 3.1% scored high levels of impulsivity, 48.8% score moderate levels of impulsive risk-taking predisposition, and 48% score low levels of impulsive risk-taking predisposition. (See Figure 12.)

These respondents, by themselves, are most likely to be predisposed to moderate rebellious risk taking (71.6%) or to moderate adventurous risk taking (55.2%).

**Significant Differences Between the Two Conferences**

At the Counterpoint Conference 20% more women scored high levels of adventurous risk taking than at the BYU Women's Conference. Both conferences have almost the same percentage of women who score as moderately predisposed to adventurous risk taking. But the BYU Women's Conference reveals 22% more women who are predisposed to low levels of adventurous risk taking. For both conferences, these women are older, higher educated, live in homes with a higher income than the average, and fit the adventurous risk-taking predisposition well—except for the fact that they are women.

Due to the different sample sizes of the two conferences, t-tests for independent samples are used to test for any significant difference between the means of the two conference populations and the reported levels of risk taking. There is significance found between the Counterpoint and BYU Women's Conference for moderate levels of adventurousness and moderate levels of rebelliousness. The Counterpoint Conference drew more women with moderate levels of rebellious risk-taking predisposition than did the BYU Women's Conference. The BYU Women's Conference attracted more women predisposed to low levels
of risk taking in the three predispositions than did the Counterpoint Conference while the respondents from the Counterpoint Conference revealed higher percentages of high and moderate risk-taking predisposition in adventurousness and rebelliousness.

Those predisposed to adventurous risk taking ought to look the same in both sets of respondents, as should those predisposed to rebellious risk taking. Both conferences evaluated separately reveal the women who completed surveys for this study are more likely to be moderate rebellious or moderate adventurous risk takers. Ignoring significant differences when combining both groups for analysis raises concern. Additionally, there may be unexplained differences in the type of Mormon woman who attended one conference over the other.

**Media Use and the Mormon Woman**

Media use among the LDS women surveyed is high. These Mormon women read magazines, on the average, about two days a week; they read the newspaper, on the average, about four and a half days a week; listen to the radio, on the average, about five days a week; and watch television, on the average, about four days a week. (See Figures 14, 15, 16 & 17.) But of the 498 women who responded to the television use question, 28% watch television seven days a week, and over half of the women (50.8%) watch from five to seven days a week. Less than 1% (.2%) choose religious programming, while 33.4% prefer sitcoms or dramas like "Seinfeld" and "LA Law." News is preferred by 30.8% of the women surveyed.

Over half (66.1%) of the 498 women responding to the radio use portion of the questionnaire listen to the radio five to seven days a week, with 30.9% listening seven days. The women preferred talk radio (19.3%), easy listening (14.5%), PBS (12.4%), and other (15.1%). The radio is listened to a full day more, on the average, for the women predisposed to high rebellious risk taking over those predisposed to low rebelliousness. This finding is similar to previous findings by Ferguson and Valenti (1990).

Better than half (52.4%) of the 487 women who responded to the newspaper use
questions read their newspapers five to seven days a week, and 31.8% read a newspaper every day. Seventy eight percent listed their local newspaper as their preference, with only 12% selecting a national paper as their favorite. The women scoring low in rebellious risk taking read the newspaper more often than those scoring moderate in rebellious risk taking.

Magazines are read only once a week by 31.6% of the 493 LDS women responding to this media measure. Over half (69.2%) read a magazine three days or less. These women prefer religious magazines (39.2%), news and business magazines (14%), and homemaking magazines (10.1%). (See Figures 18 through 25 for individual conference findings.)

**Risk-Taking Type and Media Use**

To determine if any significant difference exists between media use and the risk-taking types, the media use indices (low, medium, and high) for each of the four categories of media (magazines, newspapers, radio, and television) were tested in a one-way ANOVA with level of predisposition to each risk-taking predisposition type.

Rebelliousness was significant for newspaper use ($p = .015$) with the one-way ANOVA, and Scheffe's multiple range test identified the differences existing between those who scored moderate in rebelliousness compared to those who scored low. There was also significance for radio use ($p = .04$), and Scheffe's multiple range test revealed it between low and high rebellious risk taking. Magazine and television use reveal no significant differences among any levels of rebellious risk taking.

When the one-way ANOVAs were run with impulsiveness; magazine, newspaper, radio and television use show no significant differences. Adventurousness revealed no significant differences for magazines, newspapers and radio, but television produced significance ($p = .02$), and Scheffe's multiple range test identified that is was for those who scored high in adventurousness and those who scored low in adventurousness.
Risk-Taking Type and Concern

The LDS women responding to the concern measure (N=505) expressed their concerns in this order: the economy (21.8%), health (20.2%), societal (15.6%), human rights (11.7%), the environment (7.5%), morality (7.1%), abuse (4%), everything (3.8%), family (3.6%), other social concerns (2.8%), and 2% report they don't have any concerns. Morality and family issues combined make up only 10.7% of the choices.

The one-way ANOVAs displayed no significant differences between adventurousness and concern nor was there significance with impulsiveness. Rebelliousness showed significance (p = .02), and Scheffe's multiple range test showed that the significance existed between those who scored low in rebellious risk-taking predisposition and those who scored high in rebelliousness.

Pearson's r pointed to some significance (.004 for rebellious and .002 for adventurous predisposition) of a relationship, but weak (.13=R and .14=A), so an Eta was run which pointed to a curvilinear relationship between concern and rebelliousness (.32) when rebelliousness was the dependent variable. With both impulsiveness and adventurousness, a curvilinear relationship exists when concern (I=.34, A=.34) is the dependent variable.

Risk-Taking Type and Education Level

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), using Scheffe's multiple range test with a significance level of .05, was chosen to determine if a significant difference in means exists between adventurous, rebellious, and impulsive risk-taking predisposition levels and education.

Between education level and adventurous risk-taking predisposition using the one-way ANOVA significance was found (p < .0000), and the Scheffe's multiple range test showed the differences fell between low risk and moderate risk, low risk and high risk, and moderate risk and high risk. Impulsive risk-taking predisposition and education revealed no significance, neither did rebelliousness and education.
**Risk-Taking Type and Age**

A one-way ANOVA was run with age and adventurous risk-taking predisposition to revealed significance (p = .0000), and Scheffe's multiple test identified that the significant difference was for those scoring high in adventurousness compared with those who scored low, and for those who scored moderately in adventurousness compared with those who scored low. There was no significance manifested between impulsive risk-taking predisposition and age.

Between age and rebelliousness a significant difference (p = .0000) manifest with one-way ANOVA, and Scheffe's multiple range test showed it was between LDS women scoring high in rebellious risk-taking predisposition and those scoring moderately in rebelliousness, and for those women who scored high in rebelliousness and women who scored low in rebelliousness.

Again there was some significance when Pearson's r was used, but overall significance was weak (adventurous p=.000, -.22; impulsive p=.15, -.07; rebellious p=.000, -.23). Eta revealed a curvilinear relationship between age and rebelliousness (.44), age and impulsiveness (.42), and age and adventurousness (.46). Again, this replicates earlier research on age as a key factor in risk taking.
CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The LDS women who participated in this study are diverse in their media use and in their risk-taking attitudes. Ferguson and Valenti's subjects predisposed to risk taking were not closely affiliated with a religion. In this study, religiosity did impact responses, although not in the way presupposed.

Except for the adventurous risk taker, the Ferguson-Valenti risk takers were not represented in higher education categories. The educational levels of the women in this study factor into their diversity and their responses to the survey questions. With horizons broadened by education at higher levels, as the literature suggests, these women are more predisposed to adventurous and rebellious risk taking. While the impulsive measure reveals higher levels of low risk takers than do the adventurous or the rebellious measures, no women in this study were identified as scoring risk avoidant across all three measures. The first hypothesis of this study is therefore rejected. There is no evidence that Mormon women are more likely to be risk avoidant than predisposed to risk taking. Although Ferguson and Valenti's constructs suggest limited attendance at church for those who exhibit a risk-taking predisposition, and it was felt this conservative population held the opportunity for risk averters, these women are risk takers, their regular attendance at church notwithstanding. This would seem to corroborate Albrecht's (1989) findings that LDS religious life can have the opposite effect upon the members of the Mormon church than close affiliation does with other denominations.

Respondents in this study tend more to be moderate than high or low risk takers. A predisposition to adventurousness is more evident among this population than was predicted.
Rebellious risk taking is also far more likely to occur in this population than was hypothesized or was predicted by earlier research. Thus hypothesis two, that if an LDS woman is identified as having a predisposition to risk taking, it is more likely she will be an impulsive risk taker, is also rejected. These risk-taking measures are not exclusive; within each risk-taking predisposition there are low, medium and high predispositions, but any woman could be low in one risk-taking predisposition and high in others. As the findings indicate, these LDS women were present as moderate or high risk takers across more than one predisposition. Previous research has revealed crossover or situational risk-taking predisposition response much as the present analysis does for these women.

Two reasons why LDS women are more likely to be predisposed to adventurous or rebellious risk taking are the economic and educational level of the LDS women surveyed. The impulsive risk taker, as has been previously discussed, does not enjoy thinking. Higher education is not part of the profile for an impulsive risk taker. Emphasis is placed on education by Mormon religious leaders, who counsel church members to obtain a higher education. Goodman and Heaton (1986) found that Mormon women heed this counsel, as they have higher rates of finishing college than does the general population. Ferguson and Valenti found that adventurous risk takers like to think about their choices and decisions, and are generally in a higher economic category than the other risk-taking predispositions (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991). This population of LDS women is above the national average for economic status (Goodman & Heaton, 1986). Both of these conditions support Hall's (1990) contention that education and economic freedom give women the opportunity to contemplate their situation in life and make choices above those of simply surviving. The impulsive risk taker could be considered to be living life at the survival level, reacting rather than enacting.

The women surveyed in this study do not reflect the impulsive risk-taking predisposition profile. Valenti and Ferguson (1991) have reported from their work with over 1300 subjects that impulsive risk takers are likely young, females, have relatively low levels of education and income, and dislike thinking. The women participating in this study are older,
actively attending church, and as previously mentioned, have pursued higher education and come from higher income homes than the Valenti-Ferguson impulsive risk-taking predisposition profile identified previously. Valenti and Ferguson (1991) found that impulsives are not inclined to describe themselves as impulsive; in fact, "(d)enial of impulsivity is not uncommon" (p. 11). The question "I'm impulsive," that loaded strongly, but negatively, from the questionnaire in the factor analysis, may add further support to Valenti and Ferguson's earlier research that the woman with a predisposition to impulsive risk taking has a dislike for being labeled an impulsive person. Also impacting the response from LDS women could be religious doctrine that urges prayerful consideration of decisions and actions. The counsel is to study-out decisions in your mind first and then take it to God for validation before action. Valenti and Ferguson (1991), in a series of focus groups, report that impulsive risk takers are "more likely to spend time worrying that they're worrying too much about things. Worrying is too much like planning, and these risk takers feel planning is to be avoided. They do not see their spontaneity as stupidity, but they see time spent on worrying and planning as fruitless. Impulsive risk takers are more likely to worry after the fact" (p. 16).

Separately analyzed, LDS women attending the Counterpoint Conference score higher in rebelliousness than do women attending the BYU Women's Conference. This finding confirms what the principle investigator expected of the women attending the Counterpoint Conference; they were not attending a Church authorized conference. It was anticipated that women who attended the BYU Women's Conference would be more conservative. Yet, it is interesting that over half from each conference do score as moderately predisposed to rebelliousness. Other factors may be influencing the responses from these women, especially those who scored moderate or high levels of rebelliousness.

The profile for a rebellious risk taker identified through focus group research in 1991 by Ferguson and Valenti presents a risk taker who is likely to be young, single, and male and who "takes risks in order to maintain a self-perception of being creative and going to the 'edge' without being too extreme. ...These risk takers (value) their own creativeness, boldness,
socialness, respect for the rights of others, and their skepticism of any absolutes or rules" (p. 37). This research looked at older females of the same conservative religion, a fairly conservative group overall. The loadings of the rebellious measures in the factor analysis point to some intriguing aspects. In the Ferguson-Valenti work, a single item, "I don't like rules," was the one sure identifier of a rebellious risk taker. This is not true with the LDS woman. While that measure did load in the factor analysis, it was the weakest loading of the six questions that loaded across the three factors. The five remaining statements are distinctly grouped into two categories: 1) enjoyment of parties, and 2) dislike of authority, rules, and being directed on what and how to do something. Why these statements measuring rebelliousness do not load on the same factor as in previous research warrants further evaluation and study to determine what other variables may be influencing the groupings. That the LDS woman identified as predisposed to rebellious risk taking is not the identical type of rebellious risk taker identified by Ferguson and Valenti is clear from a gender and age perspective, what is not clear is what she is actually like. The focus group work by Ferguson and Valenti identified personal traits that the rebellious risk taker values that could easily be valued by Mormon women who are convinced they are just being one of God's unique daughters (a major tenet of Mormon religious doctrine is the individual status of each of God's children). Since statements regarding participation in drinking, smoking, and uninhibited sexual practices are validated statements that help to identify those predisposed to rebellious risk taking, other kinds of questions would prove a more effective measure for the LDS population, as has been previously stated. Rebellious from a secular definition may not be interpreted as such from a Mormon religious definition. One example could be the following of rules. Since a commandment from God to not lie would rank higher as necessary to follow than a conflicting request from a boss to tell an untruth to protect the company, the Mormon woman may well respond that she does not like being told what to do, or that she does not like having a boss. Her allegiance is ultimately only to her God in a situation such as described.

Further, additional examination of why the majority of respondents from both
conferences chose "not at all like me," to the question about enjoying a wild, uninhibited party, might offer insight into how even the women who consider themselves rebellious align themselves to orthodox Mormon teachings. What does such a finding imply for those using the media to present information about health and environmental risks? More exploration is needed among the Mormon women identified as having a rebellious predisposition to risk taking. This raises the possibility of differences between women identified as rebellious risk takers and men identified as such when the general population is considered.

The findings show that these women use media often, watching television, reading newspapers and magazines, and listening to the radio a majority of the days in a week. How these women pay attention to the media is not addressed in this study. The analysis did not find significance between media use and the impulsive risk-taking measure. Hypothesis three is therefore also rejected. This study does not support that when an LDS woman is an impulsive risk taker, she is a lower media user than if she is an adventurous or a rebellious risk taker. The study does reaffirm that LDS women are diverse and regular in their media consumption. It cannot be determined from this study what the reasons are for the active use of the media.

The study respondents mix news, entertainment and religious preferences across the media, making it clear that more diversity exists among this population than has perhaps been previously considered. Valenti and Stout (1993) have introduced the need for further investigation into the way the mainstream media deal with a religious culture such as Mormon women. LDS women are not the same homogeneous media consumers because of their religious beliefs, although those beliefs seem to play an interesting role in how the women allow the media to impact their lives. This research also has something to say to audience researchers who limit their analyses to "flat" measures of demographics. Ideology does not reveal everything. Consideration should be given to the diversity reflected within the group and the impact that will have upon responses the individuals will have to the media messages.

The fourth hypothesis, that LDS women will be more concerned with issues
threatening their religious values than with risks to their health or the environment, is also rejected. This single item measure allows for further discussion into what can really be termed this population's greater concern. But responses on concern about religious values did not approach the number of responses on concern about the economy and the women's concern with their health. No effort was made on the part of the principle investigator, nor the researcher, to examine this question in greater detail. There is a religiously based interest in health that perhaps influences how often it is in the LDS woman's thoughts and actions. The "Word of Wisdom" is a health law from the LDS canon of scriptures that dictates against consuming alcohol, tobacco, coffee and tea. This could be an intervening factor. More needs to be explored in this area. The findings do seemingly identify a need, perhaps a ferment looking for support from society or simply peers, among Mormon women. What these women are actually seeking cannot be fully determined from this study.

**Limitations of This Study**

In discussing limitations it must first be addressed that while it was expected that sampling the attendees at the two different conferences would provide for diversity among the sample, it was not anticipated that the samples would appear to be as different from each other as they are with regards to demographics and attitudes. Does being single or divorced influence the ultimate attitude toward risk taking among these women, or was it the differences in advanced educational level found between the conference attendees? The higher percentage of women who are housewives from the BYU Women's Conference instead of in the workforce may effect their attitudes toward risk taking and authority.

There may be problems in the lack of randomness in sampling the total population of LDS women. Although Goodman and Heaton's study is widely accepted, there is little demographic research available to determine how accurately this sample of attendees at two women's conferences reflects the targeted population, LDS women in general. The questionnaire did not ask where the women had been raised, lived at present, or if they were
converts to the Mormon Church, all of which could be additional factors to a risk-taking predisposition among this population. And finally, how strictly the LDS women in this study hold to the religious doctrines of the LDS Church was not surveyed. Do these women follow the counsel from their leaders and study the LDS set of scriptures daily, pray daily, pay tithing, and in addition to regularly attending church on Sunday also regularly attend the temple? Only one dimension of religiosity was assessed. This study offers a starting point for additional risk research among Mormon women or other audience segments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This project confirms the usefulness of pursuing research of a conservative, religious group to determine effective modes of communication of risk. There is value for organizations who may ignore subcultures because of false impressions about behavior, stereotyping. Diversity is evident among the studied population of Mormon women. Other subcultures should be expected to exhibit similar levels of diversity if researched.

Mormon women in this study are predisposed to risk taking, contrary to being risk avoidant. It is not clear whether religious affiliation or economic and educational levels lead to the results reported. Mormon women are likely to be moderately predisposed to adventurous risk taking and thus would be most receptive to a risk communication that targets the self from an expert source (Ferguson & Valenti, 1990; Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991), or she will be predisposed to moderate rebellious risk-taking. The recommended method for effective communication will be to allow the rebellious risk taker to be in charge (Ferguson, Valenti, & Melwani, 1991). Since those predisposed to rebellious risk taking dislike being told what to do, and dislike authority figures, a potential conflict arises in this conservative culture. Information might be received well that is targeted toward a significant other, for example children or other family members.
Future Research

This study provides a beginning point for those interested in future research into how a religious woman interacts with her health and environment and the media messages sent to impact her choices. Message testing and focus groups will reveal more about the respondents in this study and how they use the media for health and environmental risk messages. More needs to be studied to determine how differing levels of orthodoxy may influence differing levels of risk-taking predisposition.

Additional research needs to be conducted to determine why LDS women look more like the Valenti-Ferguson male profile of the adventurous or rebellious risk-taking predisposition more so than impulsive risk taking. Further research can explore the initial findings of how these women react to the rebellious measures in a different way from those previously studied. Does the doctrine of the male administrated Priesthood change the way LDS women predisposed to risk taking view themselves, men and thus authority and the institutions of men?

This study emphasizes the impact of educational levels on women and risk-taking predisposition. How education impacts risk-taking predisposition is an area for more consideration with the LDS population. More needs to be explored about the role of education, especially as a factor among women and predisposition to risk taking in the general population.

Based on new findings about media use and diversity among LDS women (Stout, 1993; Valenti & Stout, 1993), it is also recommended that work continue in understanding communication efforts to an audience where individual differences play a stronger role than presumed. Finally, this study questions whether risk aversion exists in the American population to any extent, and what implications that raises for those designing media messages about health and environmental risks.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

FIGURES
FIGURE 1: Factor Analysis of Risk-Taking Measures

Factor 1 = Adventurous
Factor 2 = Impulsive
Factor 3, 4, 5 = Rebellious
FIGURE 5: Combined Adventurous Data Set

Level of Adventurousness  N=514

FIGURE 6: Combined Impulsive Data Set

Level of Impulsiveness  N=458

FIGURE 7: Combined Rebellious Data Set

Level of Rebelliousness  N=519
FIGURE 8: Adventurousness at BYU Conference

Level of Adventurousness
N=371

FIGURE 9: Impulsiveness at BYU Conference

Level of Impulsiveness
N=331

FIGURE 10: Rebelliousness at BYU Conference

Level of Rebelliousness
N=371
FIGURE 11: Adventurousness at Counterpoint Conference

Type of Adventurousness

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
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N=143

FIGURE 12: Impulsiveness at Counterpoint Conference

Type of Impulsiveness

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<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
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N=127

FIGURE 13: Rebelliousness at Counterpoint Conference

Type of Rebelliousness

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<td>Medium</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=148
FIGURE 14: Frequency Read a Magazine (Combined Data Set)

FIGURE 15: Frequency Read a Newspaper (Combined Data Set)

FIGURE 16: Frequency Listen to Radio (Combined Data Set)

FIGURE 17: Frequency Watch Television (Combined Data Set)
APPENDIX B

INVITATION TO

SPACES AND SILENCES:

AN ENHANCED WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
13 March 1993

SPACES AND SILENCES:
AN ENHANCED WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
Sponsored by Counterpoint

Dear Friend:

Recent incidents have increased our concern about silence among Mormon women. They have been forbidden to pray to Mother in Heaven—in some cases, they have been forbidden even to talk about her. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich was not approved to speak at the 1993 BYU Women's Conference. Aileen Clyde’s expression of appreciation for the "partnership" relationship of Mormon women and men in a world-wide satellite broadcast to Mormon women was deleted in the Ensign version. Women are being silenced.

As one woman expressed it: "We live on a knife’s edge. If we’re ‘good,’ then we silence ourselves by not talking about the unpleasant realities of our lives, our questions, and our discomfort with things that feel wrong. If we’re ‘bad’ and talk about these things anyway, we are ostracized and marginalized. We lose temple recommends, Church callings, opportunities to speak and serve."

Healthy human beings need both space and silence so they can discover their identity. Not enough smothers us. Too much isolates us. How much is enough?

Join on on April 28, 1993, at the University Park Hotel, 500 S. Wakara Way, Salt Lake City, to explore the issues of space and silence in our personal lives, in our relationships, and in our institutional affiliations. The conference is an invitation to face problems realistically and share in positive ways, not an invitation to Church-bash or attack other women for their choices. Gatherings like this cost money. We also appeal to your generosity for contributions to meet the costs of the mailing, phone calls, and the meeting rooms.

The lunch hour is an open-mike time to share your own experiences, discoveries, and visions. The hotel has a restaurant but no snack bar. There are no nearby fast-food places. We suggest that you order the box lunch or bring your own.

To shave costs, this will be the only mailing. Please make copies and share them with your sisters and friends. Men are also welcome.

Join with us on April 28, enjoy what your sisters have to say, browse the book tables, meet old friends, make new ones, and—most importantly—share your own thoughts and feelings about spaces and silences.

The Counterpoint Committee,

Kody Partridge, 615 W. 100 North, Provo, UT 84601, 377-7590
Missy Vistaunet, 2241 North 1060 West, Provo, 84604, 374-2349
Lynne Kanavel Whitesides, 976 E. 200 South, SLC, 84102, 521-6252
Lavina Fielding Anderson, 1519 Roberta Street, SLC, 84115, 467-1617

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SPACES AND SILENCES:  
AN ENHANCED WOMEN’S CONFERENCE  
April 28, 1993

University Park Hotel, 500 Wakara Way, Salt Lake City

Audio-Visual drop-in presentations during the morning: Unity and Diversity: Images of Women (15 min.) slides by Jan Cook and Kate Call and Mother Wove the Morning (2 hours. 15 min.) video of Carol Lynn Pearson’s one-woman show

Registration: 8:00-8:30 a.m.

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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| 8:30-9:20 a.m. | Private Spaces, Public Voices  
Chair: Michelle Stott  
Linda Sillitoe  
Claudia W. Harris |
| 9:45-11:15 a.m. | Women and Authority: An Authors’ Panel  
Maxine Banks, chair  
Gloria Cronin  
Lorle Winder Stromberg  
Vella Neil Evans  
Janice Merrill Evans  
Janice Merrill Allred |
| 9:45-11:15 a.m. | Voice Dialogue: Hearing the Silent Selves  
Chair: Julie J. Nichols  
Sharon Steele, Voice Dialogue facilitator |
| 11:30-12:30 p.m. | Images of the Female Body—Human and Divine  
Margaret Merrill Toscano |
| 11:30-12:30 p.m. | Growing into Our Voices Together:  
The Boston Years with Laurel  
Susan E. Howe, chair  
Sue Paxman  
Judith R. Dushku |
| 12:30-1:30 p.m. | Box Lunch or Bring Your Own Sandwich  
Open Microphone |
| 1:45-2:45 p.m. | Chair: Jaime Harker  
Carol Lynn Pearson: The Interfaith Search for the Divine Feminine |
| 3:00-4:00 p.m. | The Syndrome of Silence: Personal Views  
Chair: Dawn Rossequist  
Gail T. Houston  
Linda King Newell |
| 4:15-5:15 p.m. | Chair: Camille Konchar Parr  
Panel: Making the Church a Safe Place for Women  
Sue Paxman, Judith R. Dushku, and Susan E. Howe |

REGISTRATION

Before April 20

Name: ________________________________

Address: ________________________________

$10 regular  
$5 student  
$8.50 for box lunch  
contribution to help defray expenses (Thank you!)

TOTAL: ________________________________

Mail to Counterpoint, 615 West 100 North, Provo, UT 84601 or Counterpoint, 1519 Roberts Street, Salt Lake City, 84115.

After April 20, including at-door registration: $15 regular, $7.50 student. Box lunches can be ordered only until 5 p.m. April 25 by calling Lynne Whitesides, 521-6252.

PLEASE PHOTOCOPY FOR A FRIEND!
APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE
SURVEY OF L.D.S. WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Dear Survey Participant:

You are asked to participate in a study where you will answer a number of questions about the media and about your health.

There are no anticipated risks involved in responding to the questionnaire.

Your opinions are important to us and we appreciate your assistance with the project. Your responses are confidential. If at any time while you are involved in this study, you wish to stop, you may do so. You are under no obligation to continue.

After you complete the questionnaire, the research assistant working with you will score some of your answers and tell you about other research we're conducting in which you may want to participate.

If you have questions regarding your rights in this research project, you may contact:

Dr. Millene Murphy, Chair IRB
460 Kimball Tower, BYU
Provo, UT 84602
Phone: 801-378-7191

If you would like any further information about this research at any time, contact:

Dr. JoAnn M. Valenti
Department of Communications
HFAC, E-509, BYU
Provo, UT 84602
Phone: 801-378-7020

We will consider a completed, returned survey as your consent to participate. You may detach and keep this cover letter for your own future reference. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

JoAnn M. Valenti, Ph.D.
Professor of Communications
PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This study has three parts. It is important that you finish each part before you go on to the next section. Please read all instructions and complete the questions in order. Do not read ahead or look back in the questionnaire.

EXAMPLE:
Circle the number that most closely reflects your answer. For example, if the question was: "How effective or ineffective do you think the media are at informing the public about social concerns," and you thought they were moderately effective you might circle a 4 in the scale below:

<table>
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<th>Very effective</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other questions ask that you fill in the blank with your answers.

PART 1 -- MASS MEDIA USE

We are interested in how you use MASS MEDIA. Please write only your first reaction.

TELEVISION:

1. In an average week, how many days would you say you watch television? (Circle one number. If you never watch TV skip to Question 6.)
   
   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 days

2. Of the programs you watch, what is your favorite program?
   
   __________________________________________

3. How would you feel if you were not able to watch your favorite program? (Circle one number)
   
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   I wouldn't miss it at all  I would miss it very much

4. Excluding your favorite TV program, what is one other program you often watch?
   
   __________________________________________

5. How would you feel if you were not able to watch this program? (Circle one number)
   
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   I wouldn't miss it at all  I would miss it very much

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NEWSPAPERS:

6. In an average week, how many days would you say you read a newspaper? (If you never read newspapers skip to Question 11.)
   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 days

7. Of the newspapers you read, what is your one favorite newspaper?

8. How would you feel if you were not able to read your favorite newspaper?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   I wouldn’t   I would miss it
   miss it at all   very much

9. Excluding your favorite newspaper, what other paper do you read often?

10. How would you feel if you were not able to read this newspaper?
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    I wouldn’t   I would miss it
    miss it at all   very much

MAGAZINES:

11. In an average week, how many days would you say you read a magazine? (If you never read magazines, skip to Question 19.)
    0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 days

12. What is your favorite magazine?

13. How would you feel if you were not able to read your favorite magazine?
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    I wouldn’t   I would miss it
    miss it at all   very much

14. Excluding your favorite magazine, what is another magazine you read often?

15. How would you feel if you were not able to read this magazine?
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    I wouldn’t   I would miss it
    miss it at all   very much
RADIO:

16. In an average week, how many days would you say you listen to the radio? (If you never listen to radio, skip to Part 2 Question 1)  
   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 days

17. What is your favorite station or type of program?

18. How would you feel if you were not able to listen to your favorite station or program?  
   1 2 3 4 5 16 17  
   I wouldn't miss it at all  I would miss it very much

19. Excluding your favorite program or station, what is another program or station you listen to often?

20. How would you feel if you were not able to listen to this station or program?  
   1 2 3 4 5 16 17  
   I wouldn't miss it at all  I would miss it very much

PART 2 -- DESCRIBING YOURSELF

Next are some questions about your PERSONAL BELIEFS. Please read each one and respond with your initial reaction. Do not read ahead or backwards after you begin.

1. I often speak before thinking things out.  
   1 2 3 4 5 16 17  
   Not at all like me Very much like me

2. I am an aggressive risk taker.  
   1 2 3 4 5 16 17  
   Not at all like me Very much like me

3. I believe nothing ventured, nothing gained.  
   1 2 3 4 5 16 17  
   Not at all like me Very much like me

4. I usually think carefully before doing anything.  
   1 2 3 4 5 16 17  
   Not at all like me Very much like me
5. I welcome new and exciting experiences and sensations, even if they are a little frightening and unconventional.
   Not at all like me  Very much like me

6. I'm guided mostly by my feelings.
   Not at all like me  Very much like me

7. I'm an adventurous person.
   Not at all like me  Very much like me

8. I consider all the advantages and disadvantages before making up my mind.
   Not at all like me  Very much like me

9. I enjoy the company of real partiers.
   Not at all like me  Very much like me

10. I quite enjoy taking risks.
   Not at all like me  Very much like me

11. I don't like rules.
    Not at all like me  Very much like me

12. I was always getting into everything when I was a toddler.
    Not at all like me  Very much like me

13. I like new ideas, places and people.
    Not at all like me  Very much like me

14. I often get into a jam because I do things without thinking.
    Not at all like me  Very much like me

15. I find that I often buy a new item or product on impulse.
    Not at all like me  Very much like me
16. I like wild and uninhibited parties. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

17. For me being different is important. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

18. Others say I'm one of a kind. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

19. To broaden my horizons I'm willing to take some risks. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

20. I like it when others see me as daring and adventurous. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

21. I don't like being told what to do or how to do it. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

22. I'm impulsive. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

23. I try hard to be very neat and organized. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

24. I don't like having a boss. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

25. Even as a kid, I was always doing things without thinking about the result. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

26. I don't like to travel. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me

27. I generally do and say things without stopping to think. 
   Not at all like me Very much like me
28. I like doing some risky things, especially when I can do them with other people. 

Not at all like me  

Very much like me

29. I often get so "carried away" by new and exciting things that I never think of possible snags. 

Not at all like me  

Very much like me

30. I sometimes like doing things that are a bit frightening. 

Not at all like me  

Very much like me

Please give the first two parts of the questionnaire to the research assistant. She will score it while you complete the last part of the survey.
ID.NO._______

TO BE COMPLETED BY RESEARCH ASSISTANT.
PLEASE HAND TO INTERVIEWER...AND CONTINUE WITH NEXT SECTION.

SCORING SHEET

Enter the scores for each of the questions as indicated. Next sum up the items. If respondent scores over the base value for any construct, encourage participation in a future study.

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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22 [If total &gt;8 INV.]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For items 4 & 8 use the following reverse codes, where

1 = 7
2 = 6
3 = 5
4 = 4
5 = 3
6 = 2
7 = 1

Respondent's Name: ________________________________
Address: _______________________________________
Phone Number: (_____)___________________________

Interviewer's Name ________________________________
PART 3 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

We would like some information about you and your family so that your responses can be compared with others.

1. Are you (1) male (2) female

2. Are you (1) married (2) divorced (3) single (4) widowed (5) other

3. If others live in your home, how many are under 18 years of age?

4. In what year were you born? 19____ (year of birth)

5. How much formal education have you completed?
   (1) Some education but no high school diploma
   (2) High school degree
   (3) Some college
   (4) Associate degree
   (5) Four-year college degree
   (6) Some graduate school
   (7) Master's degree
   (8) Doctorate degree (Ph.D., M.D., J.D.)

6. What is your primary occupation?

7. What is your religion?
   (1) L.D.S.
   (2) Catholic
   (3) Jewish
   (4) Protestant (Specify denomination)
   (5) None
   (6) Other (Specify)

8. How often do you attend church or synagogue?
   (1) Never
   (2) Occasionally
   (3) Frequently
   (4) Regularly
9. Which of the following concerns or troubles you the most? (Check one)
(1) Health issues
(2) The environment
(3) The economy
(4) Other social issues (Please specify)
(5) I don't have any concerns.

10. Have you or a member of your immediate family (parents, siblings, offspring or spouse) ever had a chronic, life-threatening health problem?
(1) Yes  (2) No

11. Are you a member of any environmental, political, or social activist group?
(1) No
(2) Yes Which?

12. Have you ever tried bungee jumping?
(1) Yes
(2) No Would you try in the future?
(1) Yes  (2) No

13. If you drive, at what speed would you usually drive on a clear highway with a 55 MPH speed limit?

14. When you drive or ride in an automobile, how often do you use your seat belt?
(1) Never
(2) Occasionally
(3) Often
(4) Always

15. My last visit to a doctor for a physical checkup was
(1) Within the past year
(2) Between one and two years ago
(3) Between two and three years ago
(4) More than three years ago
(5) Don't know

16. If an inexpensive home-testing kit that detected early stages of cancer was available, how likely would you be to buy it?  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely  Very likely
17. If you were at a shopping mall and you saw a booth providing free physical checkups, how likely would you be to stop by for a checkup?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  
Very unlikely  Very likely

18. How would you describe yourself politically? (Check one)

(1)___Very conservative
(2)___Somewhat conservative
(3)___Slightly leaning toward conservative
(4)___Moderate
(5)___Slightly leaning toward liberal
(6)___Somewhat liberal
(7)___Very liberal
(8)___Other _____________________________ (Specify)

19. We are trying to obtain a diverse sample in terms of race and ethnic background. What is your ethnic background?

(1)___American Indian/Native American
(2)___Black/African American
(3)___White/Caucasian
(4)___Hispanic/Latino
(5)___Oriental/Asian American
(6)___Other _____________________________ (Specify please)

20. About how much was your total household income in 1992?

(1)___Under $20,000
(2)___$20,000 to $29,999
(3)___$30,000 to $39,999
(4)___$40,000 to $49,999
(5)___$50,000 to $59,999
(6)___Over $60,000

21. Finally, how did you hear about this conference?

__________________________________________

What made you decide to attend?

Thank you for your help with this study.
Risk-Taking Predispositions Among Mormon Women: Improving Communication About Health and Environmental Risks

Shelly Nicholls
Department of Communications
M.A. Degree, December 1993

ABSTRACT

This study measures risk-taking predisposition among a conservative religious population of women, in this instance Mormon women. Risk taking is defined as a recognition of some probability of negative consequences to an action, which can include the loss of a potential reward as well as a punishment. A risk-taking predisposition results when individuals are not risk aversive but, in fact, enjoy risk taking.

Survey research collected at two conferences in Utah reveal the likelihood of moderate levels of rebellious and adventurous risk-taking predisposition among the over 500 Mormon women respondents. It is suggested that religious affiliation or economic and educational levels contribute to the results reported in this study. These findings illuminate the need for further research into the impact of orthodoxy and education in predisposition to risk taking particularly in regard to health and environmental choices.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

JoAnn M. Valenti, Committee Chair

Larrie E. Gale, Committee Member

Daniel A. Stout, Graduate Coordinator